

# The Nation

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## Events of the Week.

THERE is no ground of quarrel with Mr. Churchill's masterly statement of the Anglo-Irish case, and if Mr. Collins and Mr. Griffith accept it as "fair," we need only add the comment that it is very sad to see the leaders of the Provisional Government constrained to accept such an indictment of political weakness and such a picture of social disorganization. Mr. Churchill acquits the Free State party of disloyalty. They meant and apparently mean to stand by the Treaty. But he showed that they had given their own ground away. Within a day of declaring that not two per cent. of the Southern Irish electorate were with Mr. de Valera, they allotted him fifty-seven seats in the new Parliament against sixty-four defenders of the Treaty, without securing from him any pledge, or hint of a pledge, that his candidates would accept the necessary declaration of adherence. Their defence of the de Valera agreement seems to have been a *non possumus*. "We cannot govern Ireland in any other way." So they assented to an unfree election, with the knowledge that freedom for political Ireland was impossible. Ballot boxes would be destroyed and candidates intimidated, and sporadic fighting would break out. In effect the leaders of the Irish people had to admit that with all their virtues, the gift of political courage was wanting to them.

It is this moral infirmity which darkens the future of Ireland. Mr. Churchill spoke with a proper liberality of tone. The Government will stand firm, it appears, on two points. They will scrutinize this new Constitution, so dubiously sponsored, when it is presented a few days hence, and, without insisting on the oath, will regard the refusal of the de Valera members of the Government to sign the pro-Treaty declaration as a breach of that instrument. From that moment the British Government resumes its liberty of action. Meantime it retains the British regiments remaining in Southern Ireland as a necessary guarantee of security for the Unionists, some of whom, under pressure, are already fleeing or migrating to this country. We do not think that, if Mr. Collins accepts Mr. Churchill's description of the state of Southern Ireland, this decision can well be contested. Mr. Churchill alleged two sources of disorder: the Republican Army, obviously out of control by Mr. Collins and not controlled by Mr. de Valera, and a surrounding riff-raff of looters and bandits, practising

theft and intimidation. The second reservation applies to Ulster. We do not gather that the Government in any case think of aggressive action against the South. But the border will be defended; and invading bands will be repelled by British soldiers, who, in spite of Sir James Craig's plea, should by no means be in the control of the Ulster Government. Mr. Asquith pleaded rightly for patience as a contributory solvent of the Irish situation, for which no British statesman with a conscience can deny responsibility. But it must be patience with firmness.

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THE fated date of May 31st has come and gone and left the peace of Europe undisturbed. It has long been obvious that an agreement between Germany and the Reparation Commission was probable, and the negotiations carried on in Paris by Dr. Hermes, the German Finance Minister, and Herr Bergmann, who has won high opinions in Allied circles for his attitude throughout the reparation discussions of the past two years, ended in complete success. After something like a crisis in the German Cabinet, the Chancellor was won over to the view of his Finance Minister, and proposals, varying only verbally from those framed in the course of the Paris conversations, were duly forwarded to the Reparation Commission. On this basis a settlement has been definitely reached. The Cannes scale of payments (720 milliards gold and 1,450 milliards in kind) is maintained, for this year at any rate, and Germany undertakes not to increase her paper money above the figure of March 31st, 1922, to put her State services, such as railways, on a paying basis, to impose new taxation, and to accept a certain degree of Allied control over her finances. In its March Note to Berlin the Reparation Commission had fixed May 31st as the day by which a fully satisfactory offer by Germany must be tendered, and before that day was over the Commission was able to give its definite and formal approval to the scheme outlined above. Simultaneously, in Berlin a vote of no-confidence in the Wirth Government was being heavily defeated. There is, therefore, more hope than has existed for many months of the disappearance, for a time at least, of the most perilous of all the causes of disturbance in Europe.

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THAT, however, is only true if the deliberations of the Allied, German, and neutral bankers now sitting in Paris have a fruitful issue. Germany has made her discharge of her obligations conditional on the floating of an international loan, some part of the proceeds of which shall go to her, and it is certain that she could not fulfil the terms of the agreement without it. The amount of the loan is clearly a matter for negotiation, but the German financiers themselves, while taking the view that whatever can be raised should be raised, be the figure great or small, have based their calculations particularly on a loan of 4,000,000,000 gold marks—£200,000,000. Of that amount 2½ milliards would go in advance payments of reparations for the next five years, one milliard be earmarked for the purchase of raw materials and the restoration of German transport, and the odd half milliard be used for the rehabilitation of the mark. All that is in the hands primarily of the Bankers' Committee in Paris, and secondarily of the investing public in America and elsewhere. It is already clear that the bankers will make no proposals at all unless they are

satisfied that the reparation question as a whole has been set on a permanently satisfactory basis. That, of course, means writing down heavily the present total of 132 milliard gold marks. There is, therefore, every possibility of a reopening of the whole discussion, with the new element of a considerable inducement to France (in the shape of the proceeds of the loan) to moderate her ultimate claims for the sake of the ready money she so urgently needs.

MEANWHILE, Mr. Lloyd George, speaking on the adjournment motion in the House of Commons, dealt in an encouragingly rational tone with the whole reparation problem, emphasizing in particular his belief in the good faith of the German Government in the present emergency. Of the cancellation of inter-Allied indebtedness, on the other hand, the Prime Minister held out no hopes, declaring that it was out of the question for us to remit debts while our creditors were still pressing us. Which of our war debts there is any prospect of recovering Mr. Lloyd George did not indicate, and he has not learned yet how unfortunate an effect his constant lament over America's defection has in the United States. At the same time, the Prime Minister endeavored to rebut the charge that he encouraged the French after the Armistice to look for impossible indemnities. The famous Bristol speech was once more raked over for qualifying phrases, which, since that utterance, like most of the Prime Minister's speeches, contained something for everyone, were undoubtedly there. But what has to be considered is the natural effect of plain words on normal hearers. When an audience has imprinted on its mind such a figure as £24,000,000,000, and is assured that we are entitled to demand the whole cost of the war, and mean to get it, that we propose, in a word, to "search the Germans' pockets," it is not surprising if that makes more impression than the perfunctory proviso that we shall not take from Germany what Germany has not got. Mr. George over-stresses his "capacity-to-pay" reservations.

WITH one sentiment expressed by Lord Derby in his speech to the United Club last Monday there will be general agreement—"Conferences with the Prime Minister present seem to me a mistake." That observation the speaker qualified by the explanation that it was not meant personally to Mr. Lloyd George, but was merely an expression of the view that the Prime Minister ought to remain in the background as the final court of appeal. The truth about Conferences (if sufficient international control cannot be established through the League of Nations) is that it is essential that this country shall be represented at them by someone with a special knowledge of foreign affairs. If the Prime Minister has the necessary knowledge, and can free himself sufficiently from other duties, he ought himself, like Lord Salisbury and most recent French Premiers, to hold the office of Foreign Secretary.

If he cannot do that, he should leave the conduct of foreign affairs to the qualified Minister, subject, of course, to the customary Cabinet consultation and responsibility. To demand the old secret diplomacy, as Lord Derby does, is quite another thing. The best that can be said of that is that, as Lord Robert Cecil observed in the Genoa debate last week, it is probably less open to objection than the now approved method of "advertised secrecy." Under the old system there was at least the belated publication of diplomatic documents. To-day, there is not even that. The main part of Lord Derby's speech, however, was devoted not to methods of

diplomacy, but to relations with France. His renewed demand for an Anglo-French pact coincides with reasoned declarations by Mr. Asquith and Lord Robert Cecil against any such sectional understanding. What the moment calls for is not a pact, but a clear and decisive statement of British policy to set against the French. A mere negative opposition to French proposals is the worst irritant.

AFTER last week's debate, Genoa seems hardly likely to retain a place even among the stock-in-trade of political controversialists. It fades into the past, and the crop of subsidiary Conferences—The Hague Commissions, the Banks of Issue Conference, the Railway Technicians' Committee—to which it has given rise remain to perpetuate its memory. The debate itself was barren, except for some pertinent criticisms by Lord Robert Cecil. The Prime Minister, having solemnly informed the House that the delegates had discussed the issues before them "in a spirit of perfect amity right to the very last hour of the Conference," proceeded with studied assiduity to reconstruct the Red Army bogey, this time on the authority of the Prime Minister of Roumania and the Foreign Secretary of Poland—both of which countries have been diligently reporting Red Army concentrations on their frontiers about once a month for the past year. The information, such as it is, appears to have disturbed no one but Mr. Lloyd George, who naturally welcomes it as justification for his non-aggression truce, and it is significant that the American Government, which has unrivalled knowledge, acquired through its Relief Administration, of conditions in Russia, expresses the frankest scepticism regarding any Red Army menace.

As a whole, the Prime Minister's observations provided a complete vindication, if any were needed, of the general aims of the Genoa Conference. But neither in his rather dull opening speech nor his vigorous debating reply later did he in any way dispose of Mr. Asquith's verdict that the results of the Conference were "depressingly and even distressingly meagre." In a surprising article in a recent number of the "Secolo," the Prime Minister's favorite historian, Guglielmo Ferrero, sets a similar estimate on the Conference, ascribing what he terms the sterility of Genoa to "its initiator and chief, Lloyd George, and the Government he represents." That is very far from being the view generally prevalent in Italy, where a conviction of the success of the Conference is almost as firmly rooted as it is in Mr. Lloyd George's own mind.

THE Select Committee on Teachers' Pensions has reported, by four votes to three, that there was no implicit obligation on the part of the Government to continue them on a non-contributory basis. The decision relieves the Government from the embarrassment of its defeat in the Commons; but no one who reads the evidence submitted to the Committee will regard it as bearing out the conclusion reached. Lord Burnham, whose views are, of course, fundamental, was emphatic that the scales of salary agreed upon would have been definitely higher if the non-contributory pension had not been regarded as compensation. Sir James Yoxall gave not less emphatic evidence from the side of the teachers. Mr. Fisher shuffled a good deal; but all he could really urge was that he had never given a definite pledge that pensions should remain on their present basis. He admitted that he had spoken of the teaching profession as now an attractive one; and he must know, as well as

anyone, that the cause of it was the system created by the Burnham Report. When Mr. Fisher, moreover, remarked that the reversal of the non-contributory basis was not thought of at the Board until the report of the Geddes Committee, he gave away the last vestige of his case. That the non-contributory basis is probably an economic mistake does not excuse the fact that Mr. Fisher is attempting a change which shabbily breaks the terms of an implied bargain.

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MR. FISHER has agreed to introduce a Bill whereby the L.C.C. will be relieved from the need to provide for continuation schools. In a sense, that was an inevitable decision; for the schools have not been brought into existence outside the London area, and they have been, even within it, a very partial experiment. Yet the Bill will be very characteristic of Mr. Fisher's educational administration. He began with a great programme, and won the goodwill of all progressive minds. Little by little he has whittled that programme away, until no substantial result of the much-trumpeted Act of 1918 may be said to remain. We do not regret overmuch the disappearance of the continuation schools. They were valuable mainly as a recognition that the present school-leaving age is absurdly low, and that to plunge the youth of the country into industrial careers without further training is a shabby error. But in that aspect they were an important symbol, and every educationist except Mr. Fisher seems to have realized their significance. Their abandonment is a final notification that the Board of Education has ceased to be a pivotal position in the present Government, and that Mr. Fisher is condemned to the obscurity enjoyed by Dr. Addison before his resignation. But Dr. Addison did at least make a stout protest.

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So far as the situation in China is clarifying, it is clarifying in favor of Wu Pei-fu. The Chihli general's military supremacy is decisive. He has a firm hold over Peking, and though his policy is to leave Chang Tso-lin for the moment undisturbed in Manchuria, Chang's own officers seem likely to rise against him and precipitate further fighting north of the Great Wall. The unanswered question is whether Wu's political ability is equal to his military. There has so far been no reason to think it is, nor is there sign in any other quarter of the commanding political figure China needs if she is to be saved from impending chaos. It is reported that Wu Pei-fu proposes very wisely to attempt to secure the disbandment of some part of the superfluous soldiery in the provinces, but that is an operation calling for authority which even the victorious general can hardly wield, and money which he certainly cannot command. The unification of China is nearer to-day than it has been since the Revolution, but to say that is to say very little, and unless the immediate financial problem can be solved the beneficial effects of Wu Pei-fu's victories may go for nothing. The treasury is empty, and though the increased Customs dues agreed on at Washington should soon become leviable, it will be some time before enough surplus is acquired to ease the difficulties of the Central Government. If it is true that there is only one claimant of the chief power instead of three—for Sun Yat-sen has fared no better than Chang Tso-lin—there still remain as many provincial governors as before. That is the real political problem.

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As in the case of British ships, too large a proportion of America's brand-new tonnage is "on the mud," and for the same reason. Charters and cargoes are hard to find, and are likely to remain scarce. The phenomenon is not hard to explain when one half of the world is

waiting for the other half to start work. But American Big Business imagines the problem can be solved, at least in part, by compelling foreigners, under the usual penalties of Navigation Laws, to use American ships for American cargoes, and by subsidizing American tonnage; and is therefore intriguing legislative action to that end. The Merchant Marine Bill will be a private matter for Americans, unless it should become law, and European ships penalized when they enter American ports; then, obviously, American ships in European ports will become a problem Europeans will have to consider. We would respectfully suggest to Americans that shipping is not a business to be learned in a day, even by a Shipping Board; and that not restrictions in navigation, but the quality of the traditional knowledge of shipping possessed by the managements of the more important British house-firms, is what they should aim at.

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SIR ERNEST WILD has decided, in view of the Lord Chancellor's statement and the opinion of the Court of Aldermen, to retire from Parliament at the General Election. That is a solution, but it cannot be called a good solution. The General Election may come to-morrow, but it may well be postponed until the winter of 1923; under the self-denying ordinance of Sir Ernest, West Ham is virtually disfranchised on all "controversial questions" until Mr. George sees fit to dissolve. One can understand the Lord Chancellor's desire to avoid an inconvenient by-election; but if the principle of resignation on judicial appointment is sound, it ought to take effect at once. Nor is that all. Judicial impartiality applies not less to the Lords than to the Commons. If it is undesirable for Sir E. Wild to take part in the proceedings of one House, it is not less undesirable for Lord Carson and Lord Sumner to take part in the proceedings of the other. They are peers only by virtue of their judicial office; and they, like the City Recorder, ought to decide what career to pursue. Admittedly the position taken by the Lord Chancellor remains. That is a patent anomaly which can be removed whenever the Government gives attention to the report of the Committee on the Machinery of Government. The sooner it is finally established that the judicial function is incompatible with political activity, the better it will be for the integrity of the Courts.

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THE Bottomley trial ended in a verdict of guilty, which clearly showed a jury with its mind fully made up, and only clarified by the Judge's summary, followed by a sentence of seven years' penal servitude. There are those who argue that the result would have been obtained with a less pointed direction, and with all respect to a very able Judge, we would plead for a reversion to the more balanced style of judicial charge. In this case, the seeming complication of a great financial swindle, purposely confused, as the Judge held, so as to make investigation difficult or impossible, may be held to excuse a simple and trenchant reduction of the issue to its central point. This was done. Bottomley, said the Judge, had practically abstracted £150,000 of these trust bonds—"Truth" insists that the theft was greater than this—to serve his pleasures or his ambitions. His plea was that he had made corresponding repayments, and he alleged a fund of £60,000 kept in a safe in his room. This is the old dodge of the Humbert safe. The simple answer was that the money had gone. Bottomley's career of prey is over, and for good. The special shame of it is its cashing of war-emotions for private plunder. He was used by the Government for recruiting purposes, and he played it false. The war-spirit is served by crooked instruments, which become its later Nemesis.



## Politics and Affairs.

### AN IDOL.

"Mr. Stewart Chamberlain, the ex-English German, lamented the other day that Germany did not possess a MAN. . . . Although we are not short of leaders of men we do not sufficiently employ them. Take the case of Mr. Horatio Bottomley, whose tonic utterances in this journal give inspiration and comfort to the most lugubrious souls. Mr. Bottomley exercises an enormous influence with his pen and voice. Are recruits wanted? He gets them! Is there a strike to settle? He can pour oil on troubled waters. Is there a cause to plead? He pleads it successfully.

"His crusade for a 'business Government' is well remembered. Its fruits are now to be observed in new committees appointed to get things done. Yet his great talents are mostly exercised 'unofficially.' There is much more work that Mr. Bottomley could do. He is a force in the State. His services should be utilised more and more by the Government."—*The Sunday Pictorial*, July 25th, 1915.

SOME years ago a now forgotten author wrote a book entitled "Memories of Extraordinary Popular Delusions." It is a pity that Charles Mackay could not have lived till to-day, and have added a picture of Horatio Bottomley to his portraiture of Matthew Hopkins, John Law, and other smashed idols of our market-place. For in a sense Bottomley was the crown of all these impostors of past time. He was a demagogue, and demagogy, if an old-world fashion, is a finished modern trade. He was a hypocrite of the Pecksniffian type, with a great war and a mighty Empire to play the fool in. And he was a student, at once simple and profound, of an age of money and pleasure. It was a world to loot, and if Bottomley missed some chances—he was never Prime Minister of England—he took others. He never did or established anything necessary, useful, good, or important. He never seems to have had money that was not lost as soon as made; he was twice bankrupt; and he had against him the scornful judgments of some of the ablest lawyers on the Bench. Yet he had the consummate art to present himself as the type of his age: pious, but no fanatic, no censor of innocent freedom; enjoying a gamble, and yet, it was hinted, an adept at the mysteries of finance; jolly, but not flawless; in short, an Englishman.\* It was a finishing stroke of shrewdness for this man to associate himself with a paper called "John Bull." It seemed to complete his identification with the country, and to stand him instead of character, attainments, the success that attends the application of talent, or the strokes of genius and good endeavor. There was no such rank "outsider." And yet this impostor, supple as he was brazen, contrived to foist himself on a nation of noble qualities, engaged in a fearful enterprise, as if he were its soul's interpreter, a kind of God's spy for the name and fortunes of England.

Therefore, though we dislike the existing judicial scheme of heavy sentences, it is, we doubt not, a good thing that the great Bottomley chase is over at last, and its dangerous quarry snared and appropriately dealt with. Yet let us go back a little. Bottomley's career did not begin yesterday. It has been a prosperous and exciting run of at least thirty years. Within that period it has been possible for an almost acknowledged rogue to become the most powerful and popular private citizen in this country; for a writer of coarse fustian, well lined with hypocritical cant, to earn the lordliest income in working

journalism; and for a vulgar adventurer to gain, for a few months at least, a political position which set him in the public eye as a leader of parties, and from which he could propose himself to Mr. Asquith for the office of Postmaster-General. Even yesterday there was a Bottomley group in Parliament, and at this hour more than one M.P. owes that somewhat over-honored title to the man whose last effort in advocacy was delivered within a step or two of the dock.

For Bottomley was not only a seeker of fame and honor; he dispensed them. Presumably he did not ask for the official invitation to Headquarters during the war. But it came in acknowledgment, it is said, of his services as a beater-up of youth and a loud-voiced trumpeter of war. The credit he received from the Government for his success as a missionary in vicarious sacrifice, and that it handed to him for its own purposes, he, as was his character, promptly cashed in the savings of fools; having been acclaimed in Lord Rothermere's Sabbath chronicle as a redeemer of England, he proceeded to play Autolycus to the resulting crowd of bumpkins. It is no consolation to think that every intelligent reader of his articles knew them for the trash they were, and that their writer had his tongue in his cheek for every sacred or homely symbol and feeling that he played with. If his career ended in the misery and defeat of Pecksniff, that is a tribute to the nature of things, and to the watchfulness of an honest and capable financial journalist, who finally tracked him through the tangle of his booby-traps. But who can say that if he had once more slipped through the fingers of the law, he could not have formed up a new "Bottomley crowd," and delayed the notorious exit of Monday for a few years more?

For that reason the important question is how far Bottomley was England, and whether the prison doors closed on Monday afternoon not only on a personal defeat, but on a finally found-out and unwanted type of public character. For really it is a shame to think how far this man went. In view of his heavy punishment, one would like to say a redeeming word of a showman whose gambols so long amused and excited his countrymen. But, save for a dramatic power of advocacy, used mainly to save his skin, and a little to popularize (and coarsen) the war, it is difficult to see where the attraction came in. Gross of person as of mind, his wit, if it existed, was of the table, and the flabby journalistic of his coarse-looking and ill-written newspaper never once acquired the sting and steel of the born pamphleteer. He made an antic of his "conversion" to a religion he could not have believed in. Ideas he had none, and what he had to say was about as valuable as a bookmaker's roaring of the odds, and was uttered in much the same style. Such careers may in their dishonesty arise, as the "Herald" says, from the capitalistic age and its hurried and universal pursuit of wealth. But we should add that they are the special reward of ignorance, the inevitable penalty of a sensational and uncritical Press, of a low standard of national taste and culture, as well as of the good-natured habit of our people of taking a shouting egotist at his own valuation, and letting sentimental rhetoric pass for clear thinking and a conscientious application to difficulties. Certainly Bottomley was no slur on what are called "advanced politics." He pandered to money and the swell mob, not to poverty, and no more resembled Cobbett than he did Wordsworth. Yet—has the country learned its lesson, or will our Orgon open his doors and his heart again to a second Tartufe? Before the Empire slips away from us, as it is slipping, it seems the work of wisdom to restart the mission of culture to the people who still possess and

\* Compare Tartufe:—"Ah, pour être dévot, je n'en suis pas moins homme."



govern it. To a democracy at least, fineness is all. Aristocracy secured culture for a class, at a great price, by the acquisition and virtual monopoly of the means to knowledge and power. But the rule of the multitude must somehow be justified in like measure, or it sinks to government by brawlers such as Bottomley.

### MR. RUTENBERG'S CONCESSION.

As a result of the belated discovery by various Members of Parliament of a hydro-electric concession granted to a Mr. Pinhas Rutenberg in Palestine, the whole principle of mandates is likely to come under discussion in the House of Commons. That is no bad thing, and if the debate broadens out from Palestine to the whole question of the Class A Mandates for Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia, a discussion of some value may result. For the moment, Mr. Rutenberg and his concession hold the field to the exclusion of broader issues. Who is Mr. Rutenberg, and what are the privileges bestowed on him by the Government of Palestine? As to the former point there is little to be said against Mr. Rutenberg, and something in his favor. He is a Russian Jew, an ardent Zionist, and a competent civil engineer. He took a prominent part in the Social Revolutionary movement in Russia at the time of the formation of the First Duma in 1905, and was involved in various picturesque and perilous adventures with the notorious Father Gapon. After holding an official post of some importance under the Kerensky Government, Rutenberg left Russia when the Bolsheviks came into power, and since the Armistice has been settled in Palestine, working out plans for the industrial development of the country. That development, as everyone knows, depends largely on the elaboration of schemes for harnessing the extensive potential water-power the country has at its command. To this problem Rutenberg assiduously applied himself, and the scheme he worked out was described very lucidly by the Duke of Sutherland, speaking for the Government in the House of Lords, when the question was raised in that Chamber last March. The proposal, it was explained, was that the Jordan should be dammed at the point where it left the Lake of Tiberias, and the lake converted into a great natural reservoir. Turbines were then to be installed near the dam, and the water-power employed for the generation of electricity, which could be distributed over most of Palestine, the water thus laid under contribution being returned to the Jordan after passing through the turbines.

On the practicability of such a scheme there can clearly be two opinions, but the Palestine authorities, and particularly the High Commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel, concluded that the plan was practicable and likely to be beneficial to Palestine. The question thereupon arose who should be responsible for carrying out the scheme. The Government itself had no capital at its command, and the loans it intends to raise are already earmarked for other purposes, such as the construction of harbors. Though it is vaguely rumored that various British firms endeavored to secure the necessary concession, neither their names nor any other details have been given, and there is no reason at present to doubt the statement that when Mr. Rutenberg offered, as he did, to raise (principally among Zionists) the required capital of £2,000,000 on condition of being entrusted with the work himself, he was putting before the Palestine Government a proposal much more favorable than any it had received from other quarters. Having in view all the conditions attached to the Government's agreement with

Mr. Rutenberg, there is a good deal to lend color to the claim that he was more anxious, as a Zionist, to develop the country, than as a business man to make profits. That, however, can be no more than a matter of opinion, and it has no bearing on the main principles involved.

Those principles, as defined by the chorus of critics who have just discovered Mr. Rutenberg and his machinations, are two. First, it is alleged, Rutenberg, a Russian Jew (crowning iniquity), is given a monopoly over the head of possible British competitors. Secondly, his contract contains no clause requiring him to place his orders in Great Britain, and that though Palestine was conquered by British troops, is now garrisoned by a British force, and has involved various charges to British taxpayers. In point of fact Rutenberg has placed in Germany orders (in connection with an undertaking at Jaffa) for machinery which would have cost him 120 per cent. more in Great Britain. The whole of the initial criticism of the concession manifestly emanated from persons who had neither read the terms of the Palestine draft mandate nor acquired the smallest comprehension of the Mandate system. For with regard to the grant of the concession to Mr. Rutenberg and his fellow-Zionists, it is completely in line with the provisions embodied in the mandate for the creation of "an appropriate Jewish agency" for the purpose of co-operating with the Administration in economic, social, and other matters, and for the conclusion of agreements between the Administration and the agency in question whereby the latter would "construct or operate on fair and equitable terms any public works, services, and utilities, and develop any of the natural resources of the country, in so far as they are not directly undertaken by the Administration," such arrangements providing for a limitation of profits and for adequate general control by the Administration. That such checks on the concessionaire have in this case been duly imposed was made clear in the House of Lords debate, when assurances were given that the constitution, articles of association, and regulations of the Rutenberg company would be subject to the approval of the High Commissioner, and that its profits would be limited and the price charged by it for electric power be controlled by the Administration. Mr. Rutenberg appears, in short, to have got his monopoly much on the same terms as most electric lighting and similar undertakings in this country.

What is much more important, for it raises a question touching not merely Palestine but every mandated area, whether held by Great Britain or any other Power, is the demand that because British soldiers conquered Palestine, Palestine must be exploited for the benefit of British trade. It may be observed that even in the case of the Crown Colonies that principle has been carried no further than an enactment, forced through under war conditions in the face of lively opposition, of a small measure of Imperial Preference. It has been left to Sir William Joynson-Hicks and his friends to select a territory held under the strictest guarantees of disinterestedness, as "a sacred trust of civilization," for the establishment of an exclusive British monopoly. What does this mean? It means, of course, scrapping completely the Palestine draft mandate, which expressly provides that there shall be "no discrimination in Palestine against the nationals of any of the States members of the League of Nations as compared with those of the Mandatory or of any foreign State in matters concerning taxation, commerce, or navigation." As to that, it is manifest that discrimination in favor of the Mandatory's own traders is discrimination against the traders of every other State member of the League of Nations. What is more pertinent at the present moment,

it is discrimination against the traders of the United States. Now the United States Government, after lengthy, difficult, and delicate negotiations, has at last consented to withdraw its objections to the Palestine mandate, and actually to sign a treaty with this country confirming the terms of the mandate, provided it shares with the States actually members of the League the benefits of the open-door policy for which the mandate stands. It is at this particular juncture that the claim is put forward here that the door shall be shut against all but British traders.

What the Joynton-Hicks policy amounts to is a demand that we shall abandon once for all any pretence to disinterestedness in the administration of undeveloped territories. The Mandate system was the one signal advance in political principle embodied in the treaties of peace. The language of Article 22 of the League Covenant verges on the rhetorical in places, but General Smuts's conception, expressed in his own words in the stipulation that "the mandatory shall in no case adopt an economic or military policy which will lead to its special national advantage," marks a step further forward than any yet previously taken in administrative practice, though we are entitled to claim that few British colonies have fallen far short of that standard. If the Joynton-Hicks proposals are sustained by the House of Commons, of which there is fortunately little prospect even in the present Chamber, either the mandatory system goes altogether or this country resigns, as it is still entitled to do, its mandate over Palestine. What will then be the fate of Palestine, whose strategic relation to the Suez Canal it is superfluous to demonstrate, Sir William will no doubt explain. Meanwhile it is perhaps pertinent to point out that Great Britain is not the only holder of mandates, and it may be worth while even for the Member for Twickenham to consider how far an abandonment by, let us say, France of the principle of trusteeship in Syria, and the frank exploitation of that territory for the benefit of French traders, will make for the welfare of the population and the peace of the East generally.

There are, of course, special conditions in Palestine. The Balfour declaration on the creation in that province of a national home for the Jews, has raised for better or worse questions that have not to be faced elsewhere, notably as between Jews and Arabs. The Rutenberg concession itself is one of those questions. The fact that the Treaty of Sèvres is not yet ratified (to put it euphemistically), and that objections on the part of various European States, and, rather significantly, the Vatican, at the last meeting of the League of Nations Council, postponed the final approval of the draft mandate by the League, tends to increase the difficulties of the Palestine Government. But what is involved in the objections taken to the Rutenberg concession is not any question of administration. It is a question of the fundamental principle on which the Mandate system rests. To face that frankly in the House of Commons, in relation not merely to Palestine, but to Mesopotamia and the African mandated territories, can do nothing but good.

### THE SCRAPPING OF GRETNA.

ONE of the most significant things about the industrial reaction which has prevailed in this country during the past three years is the comprehensive denial—not specific but subtly suggested—that anything good or commendable may be found in Government control or initiative in industry during the war. The feeble voices of those

who have described the advantages to the nation as a whole of an organization built up at great speed and in face of immense difficulties have been drowned in the loud chorus of denunciation and criticism by those who have concentrated on the blunders and exaggerated them out of all relative proportion. This general reflection is prompted by the news that the Disposals Board has failed once more to sell the great cordite factory at Gretna. Critics who have forgotten the facts, if they ever knew or understood them, are in the habit of referring to Gretna as a white elephant. They speak scornfully of the extravagant cost of the factory, ignoring the conditions under which it was built. What we are now concerned about, however, is not the cost of Gretna (estimated at ten millions), or the results of its war-time work—although its organizers and directors have made out a strong case on these matters—but the failure to utilize for three years the most efficient industrial equipment of its kind in the world, and particularly the cynical and inexcusable scrapping of a social-industrial organization and experiment which did actually show one practical way to the Prime Minister's new world for heroes.

It is doubtful if the full story of Gretna will ever be recorded in permanent form, but if it were to be written the enterprise would be regarded in years to come as important and significant not so much because of its production of cordite, but because a little group of public-spirited and far-seeing men seized the opportunity of developing a community life for industrial workers in advance of any social conception which has yet penetrated the mind of big business in this or any other country. The achievement was a miracle of swift improvisation. The factory itself was built at a speed which meant, of necessity, that cost must be a secondary consideration, but even in this part of the task, as will be shown later, there was planning for the future as well as for the urgent present. In these circumstances the directors would have incurred no public censure if they had limited their care for the human element to the provision of the conventional canteens and of transport to and from the factory. It is only possible here to indicate briefly how far beyond this their ideals and enthusiasm carried them.

Twenty thousand people were employed at the factory, and everything that was possible within the available time of a few months was done to provide housing accommodation on the spot. The existing village became the nucleus of the new community life. Houses were built for married people, but as the majority of the workers were single girls, drawn from all parts of the country, the plan of constructing wooden hostels, each with dormitory room for from sixty to eighty girls, was adopted. They were in charge of matrons, whose aim was to foster the co-operative spirit. The hostels were simply furnished, but scrupulously clean and charmingly decorated. This was only a beginning. A central bakery, perfectly equipped, had an output capacity equal to the demand of the whole of the workers for bread and cakes. Central dining-halls, with all available labor-saving machinery in the kitchen, supplied each day many thousands of varied, nourishing, and nicely served meals at a price which would have created acute discontent among city workers if they had known; and a great central laundry opened the eyes of many of the city girls for the first time to the possibilities of cleanliness when the spirit of public service, organization, modern machinery, and unlimited electric power are harmoniously combined.

These things touched only the material side of life, and Gretna had much more to show. A committee was formed to stimulate co-operatively all the healthy



interests of social life. A beginning was made on the strength of a prospective financial grant from the Ministry of Munitions by building a kinema hall in six weeks. This was run on ordinary commercial lines, and within a few months there had been built out of the profits a lecture and concert hall, and institutes and reading rooms for both men and women. Outdoor recreations were provided from the same source. The women's institute was a fitting complement to the hostels. It was an attractive place for gossip, reading, and indoor games; and a large sewing room, fitted with an adequate number of machines, rounded off the communal provision for the primary needs of food, clothing, and cleanliness.

What of the factory itself? It was perhaps inevitable that the wooden buildings and the mixing houses in the area devoted to the actual making of cordite should be of little use for peace-time production, but this cannot possibly be said of the great buildings, solidly constructed to last for generations, in which glycerine, sulphuric and nitric acid, electric power, and pulped cotton were produced. Each of these buildings could be regarded as a self-contained factory, planned and equipped to achieve the highest possible efficiency, and providing for the workers conditions of health and comfort rarely to be found in any industry or country. The sulphuric acid building may be taken as typical. The writer was told by the chief supervisor that the production of acid had been raised at Gretna to somewhere about 90 per cent. of the theoretical maximum from a given quantity of raw sulphur, as compared with between 60 and 70 per cent. in the average chemical works of the old type in Great Britain. Every available mechanical appliance to eliminate unpleasant labor was installed, and the fumes and filth which have made a desolation of the Lancashire chemical towns were virtually abolished. The glycerine plant was equally remarkable as an example of progress in scientific and technical organization, while the great halls in which the raw cotton was treated were filled with specially designed machines which could have been adapted with little trouble for the production of paper pulp. Enormous quantities of raw material for glycerine had been collected at the factory when the order was given to close down. The needs of the country could have been supplied for years

ahead at a cost ridiculously low compared with the price people have been forced to pay. But the intelligence of Whitehall could not rise beyond the stupidity of a forced sale of the material and its costly transport, to be used up in distant and far less efficient works.

When the war ended, and the need for cordite disappeared, it seemed incredible to the people in charge of Gretna that a devastated world, wanting every kind of commodity for its reconstruction, could have no use for the wonderful organization they had built up. In less than two years they had, by hard work, enthusiasm, and disinterested service, achieved new possibilities of industrial life. They saw still more possibilities of advance, given the continuance of Gretna as a producing centre under settled peace conditions, and a purpose and direction to lift it above the common run of industrial enterprises. But a Government which could help to finance important business magnates in the dyestuffs and cellulose industries had no interest in utilizing and developing for the benefit of the country the immense potentialities of Gretna, where by this time there might have been, as a model for the rest of the manufacturing world, a thriving industrial community, producing at the top pitch of efficiency, and enjoying unexampled facilities for a full and healthy domestic and social life. The fact has to be recorded that neither the members of the Government nor the industrial captains who knew all about Gretna desired to establish permanently the conditions which had been created there, and the public was both unconcerned and ignorant of what had been done at Gretna—a circumstance that is not surprising, because no British journalist was allowed to see the inside of the factory until after it had been closed down, although many foreign journalists were taken there for propaganda purposes during the war. Now, after the factory has been derelict for three and a half years, the nation which is still paying for it is merely allowed to know that certain industrialists would buy it if they could get it at their own valuation. This, it has to be inferred, is probably little better than the price of scrap. In any event, the infinite possibilities of Gretna from the human point of view have been deliberately destroyed. Need we add that we have yet to hear the voice of the "anti-wastrel" raised in indignant protest?

## THE FALL OF BOTTOMLEY.

By A. G. GARDINER.

I SUPPOSE no judicial sentence in recent years has been received with so acute and so general a sense of relief as that inflicted this week upon Horatio Bottomley. The man had become a sort of national nightmare, a public shame and humiliation, and the possibility that he might leave the Old Bailey a free man, re-established as the idol of the thoughtless mob, was the subject of widespread anxiety. Now that he is sentenced and safely under lock and key, it may seem incredible that there should ever have been any doubt as to his conviction. A clearer, more overwhelming case was never presented to a jury. Encouraged by the apparent impotence of the law to deal with his prolonged and notorious criminalities, and by the astonishing dominion he had secured over the mind of the vulgar, he had at last become reckless and had committed a series of colossal thefts as impudent and barefaced as any highway robbery. They were accompanied by every circumstance that could make them odious—meanness, hypocrisy, the betrayal of the simple-

minded who trusted him, the selfishness of a coarse and cruel nature.

And yet, in spite of all this, there was, almost up to the end, a grave fear that there might be, not an acquittal, of course, but a disagreement of the jury. I went into the Court one day last week, not to hear the evidence, but to take stock of the jury, and at the close of the day's proceedings I found those engaged in the case as uncertain about the issue as the man in the street. "If it were a question of the judge, any judge," said one of the counsel to me, "there could of course be no doubt, but the jury—who can tell?" I left the Court feeling that it was not Bottomley only who was on trial, but the British jury system with him.

Well, Bottomley is condemned and the British jury system is acquitted, and now that the nuisance that has poisoned the public air for a generation has been swept away, we may usefully ask why it was allowed to pollute the world so long and so triumphantly. It cannot be

a pleasant inquiry, for it involves a good deal more than Bottomley. It involves that enormous public which made him its idol and gave him his sinister power. It involves the law which, prompt and efficient in the punishment of the small practitioners of crime—the defaulting clerk, the woman who steals a blouse, the boy who puts his hand in a till—seemed helpless against this brigand, who preyed upon society with an effrontery unprecedented in the annals of rascality. It involves the Press which, until "Truth" addressed itself to the task of getting rid of this public shame, preserved a craven silence in regard to Bottomley's proceedings, printed his name with respect, accepted his advertisements, published, even while the case was going on, articles which were undisguised eulogies of the man. It involves distinguished men, in and out of Parliament, who gave Bottomley the prestige of their patronage and approval. It involves, finally and most seriously, the Government itself which employed Bottomley, on what terms we now know, and in doing so covered his villainies with the hall-mark of the State.

Of all these agents and accessories of Bottomley's triumphant career of crime the most vulnerable is perhaps the least reprehensible. It is humiliating enough, of course, to reflect that, in a country where education and political power are universal, so base and evil a man should have been able for years to command the greatest popular following of anyone in public life. It is a fact that throws a rather cheerless light on the future of democracy. If so brazen a scamp can be accepted by millions of his fellow-countrymen as an inspired leader, we may well despair of the intelligence of a public which either does not know a rogue when it sees him, or, knowing him, prefers him to honest men.

Some allowance, of course, has to be made for the convulsion that disordered the public mind and shattered its canons of conduct. Bottomley was an old hand in crime before the war; but it was not until the war that he became a national curse. The state of war is always the harvest of the ruffian. He comes to the top in times of commotion as naturally as scum comes to the top of the water. When the public mind is disturbed and anxious, filled with hopes and fears, swept by sudden waves of panic, easily infuriated with hate, and inaccessible to reason, it is easy for the Bottomleys of journalism and politics to come to power. The reputations of war are the reputations of the exploiters of the moods of the public. They are the reputations of the impostors and the charlatans, the sham patriots and the shallow rhetoricians, Mr. Leatherlungs the demagogue, who is "keen on the war" and keener still on the profits of the war, and all the odious tribe of parasites who use the agonies of their country to exalt and enrich themselves. Go over the list of the men who did well out of the war in any department of life, the men who made fortunes and won power and titles, and you will have some measure of the injury which war does to the moral standards as well as to the material conditions of society.

Among this crowd of pestilent harpies, Bottomley was the most unabashed and audacious. He made a false step at the beginning. He placarded London with "To Hell with Servia." But after this initial error he never turned back. He found that the war was a profitable screen behind which to operate, and he set out to make himself the Super-Patriot, the friend of the Tommies, the loudest voice of every passion that swept over the public. No mood found him unprepared to exploit it, with the coarse extravagance of a

man who believed in nothing except that the public were fools whom it was his business to rook. He founded his League of Hate, and did more than anyone at a critical moment to turn public feeling against America and to discredit the peace policy of its President.

If the mood changed, or seemed likely to change, he was ready with his cant, which was worse than his blasphemy. When one of the Sunday papers announced that the Rev. R. J. Campbell was going to contribute to its columns, he anticipated him in Lord Rothermere's "Sunday Pictorial"—which published "another astounding" article from his pen each week—by blandly announcing his discovery of God. His effrontery knew no limits, and he could carry blasphemy into the region of farce, as when he began one of his pious articles, "I heard a voice from heaven say 'Write'." And behind this smoke-screen of sham religion and sham patriotism he laid his plans for the plunder of the simple-minded and confiding people who believed that his truculence implied honesty, and were confirmed in that belief by his immunity from punishment.

It is easy and tempting to throw stones at his victims. Some of them, no doubt, suspected that he was a rogue, but thought that he was a clever rogue whom it was profitable to follow. The bulk of them, however, were just ordinary, ignorant people who did not know that he was a rogue, and who would have fled from him if they had known. It may be said that they ought to have known, and in a measure that is true, for his career for thirty years had been a career of shady financial adventures which had brought him repeated exposure, though he had always succeeded in escaping the brand of the criminal.

But lamentable though the credulity of the public has been, it is not they against whom the major indictment can be directed. I can imagine the ex-soldier and the ex-soldier's widow who have lost money they could ill spare in this last confidence trick of the swindler, pointing their fingers in accusation in quite other directions. They would say, fairly enough, that though they had heard and seen attacks made on Bottomley in the courts they had never seen him convicted and sentenced for dishonesty. On the other hand, they had seen him befriended, eulogized, and employed by those who, if he was a scoundrel, must have known he was a scoundrel. They had seen him elected to Parliament and acclaimed there as one of the authentic and reputable voices of the nation—no man more sure of catching the eye of the late Speaker than he, no private member more capable of filling the House or of winning its cheers. The law, although it had often attacked him, had failed to discredit him, and the Press, which could not fail to be informed of his real character, treated him with a respect which they were bound to assume could not be accorded to a man who, though he had escaped gaol, was known to be a criminal. They had seen his scheme of Premium Bonds endorsed and supported by reputable financiers and responsible public men. They knew that he had been in close association with the Government during the war, that he had been employed at the "front" and throughout the country in various services on their behalf, and that his Premium Bonds scheme had been spoken of with approval in the House of Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. And knowing all this, they are entitled to ask whether their credulity was not the natural result of the culpable silence or the culpable acquiescence of those who, knowing the truth, took no steps to protect the ignorant against the wrongdoer.

The significance of this squalid episode will be missed if we do not see in it a grave reflection on our public



institutions and on our standards of public conduct. Bottomley would not have grown to such monstrous proportions and would not have survived so long if he had not been the symptom of a moral degeneracy which has spread like a palsy over our corporate life, and nowhere more disastrously than in the realm of public affairs. Thanks to the courage and public spirit of one newspaper, the scandal that has humiliated the country so long is at an end, and the air is cleaner and clearer for the explosion. The repercussions of the verdict given this week in the Central Criminal Court will extend far. They will shake much that is rotten in our public life to its foundations.

## A London Diary.

LONDON, THURSDAY.

I AM afraid there is not much to be added to Mr. Churchill's summary of the Irish situation, but it is fair to give the view of those sincere Irish believers in the Treaty who yet defend the agreement with de Valera on the ground that with it, or even by it, the Treaty may yet be saved. It is not an exhilarating defence, but its ground is that de Valera, realizing at last, or beginning to learn, how fatal the existing entanglement is, is disposed to try whether the Treaty cannot, one day or another, be made to work. I don't know that even this modified attitude or tone, if it exists, is a matter of conviction or of average foresight. It may be a late fruit of the conviction that the civil population—working Ireland in a word—is against him. Anyway, it is possible that there will be a united effort to restore order. If it succeeds, or moderately succeeds, the new Dáil will meet to draw up a Constitution. No oath will be taken, but the Constitution will be drafted, and, though Republican, may just come within the terms or the spirit of the Treaty, which the nation really accepts.

I CONFESS that I see little light here. How can England tolerate the cool ignoring of the Treaty implied in the refusal of the de Valera members to sign or declare adhesion to it? And is the Government likely to accept a whittling down of the terms of the Treaty as the price of agreement with the Republicans, especially when it was assured unofficially that if Mr. Collins and his friends stuck to their guns, the nation was bound to give them an ample electoral majority? Even if England were placable (and she has been placable throughout), what hope is there of conciliation with Ulster? Such political folly I have never seen. Ireland could have had a virtual Republic, with a friendly England. She has been seduced into a transaction of ill-faith for a nominal Republic, which England cannot accept. The greater Power may do nothing overt against her—for the keeping of the Ulster border is an act of elementary good faith with the Northern Government—but she can do nothing for her. The small consoling thought is the assurance that the Free Staters meant no disloyalty to their bond, and that they still hope, in a roundabout way, to retrieve it.

As for the personal part of Mr. Lloyd George, it is, I think, still an uneasy, uncertain, and in all probability a rapidly changing one. For the moment,

I imagine, no actual combination against him exists apart from the Die-Hards. Some time ago, revolt from within the Cabinet was an all but finished affair. The ultimatum was stopped when on the wing, and finally quashed. But no real reconciliation was ever made. In particular Mr. Churchill's star rather perceptibly rises as Mr. George's falls. And for a simple reason. Churchill's Liberalism is a thing of the past; opportunist as he is, he is more or less of a revert to his old tabernacle. But Mr. George is homeless. He came back sore and discontented with the management of things in his absence, and free of his complaints. And beneath the tug of ambition hide the weariness of failure and the physical desire for rest, and a change of occupation and interest. But where is he to go? No party door stands open; more than one is definitely closed against him. He disagrees with the Conservative Party, yet leads it. He more or less agrees with the Opposition; yet both sections of it distrust him morally and disbelieve in his star. He is a curiously resourceful man; yet his detachment is evident amid the crowded surroundings of a Prime Minister with an apparently unbroken majority.

LET credit go where it is deserved. I doubt whether Bottomley would ever have been brought to bay if the financial editor of "Truth" had not fastened on the immense detail of the Premium Bonds swindle, and without (so far as I know) making a single slip, showed the way through the labyrinth. I don't know that Mr. Colsey—hundreds of journalists had never heard his name—was aware of the large withdrawals from the trust funds to substantiate Bottomley's dream of riches by means of a Sunday newspaper. But he insisted that these were trust funds, and showed week by week how every condition of such a holding had been ignored or violated, and he set hundreds of silly people on the alert to recover their money. Bottomley was much alarmed. First he affected to pooh-pooh the attack. Then he tried to stop it by way of writs and threatening notices to the wholesalers. Too late. After the "Truth" exposures, the Treasury could not fail to act.

As for the public, its good nature is simply miraculous. Having given Bottomley a good run with its money, it dismisses him with no ill-feeling. I heard a company of farmers discussing the trial before its conclusion. They spoke of Bottomley as if he were a horse. "I had ten pounds on him," said one. "I lost it; 'twas a gamble." The general conclusion was that he would get off. A rural sage summed up the mind of the general public. "If he don't get thru," he said, "it'll be the fust time."

THE Phoenix Society has certainly done its duty by the Restoration drama. It was almost bound to present Dryden's "Amphitryon," and as specimen work that is as good as any other. The Restorationists, for all their craftsmanship, were a sterile lot, and Dryden, the most powerful writer of them all, though neither the wittiest nor the best dramatist, was as barren as the rest of them. Barrenness is the mark of "Amphitryon." It is good stage writing, easy but not slipshod in the modern manner. But that is about all. Dryden takes a Lucian theme, but save for a hit or two at the corruption of Court and politics—Charles II. really makes up into a good

comic Jupiter—misses both Lucian's straight thrust and his essential cleanness of mind and soul. Naturally such a play does not advance at all. It is cynical and never instructive. It is coarsely amusing, but the same scenes and situations are played over and over again. It is a mechanical thing without life, and yet lending itself well to the slighter diversions of the actors' art. And its representation is certainly a useful piece of historical reminiscence.

#### TO MY MYRTLE.

My lovely myrtle, that the frost burnt sore,  
Searing her shining dress, now pranks to the sun  
A thousand little golden crests and more;  
Decked like to Botticelli's Spring's my glorious one.  
So blooms her winter-wounded heart; and soon  
With milk-white stars she'll shine; and then she'll  
preen  
Her young arraying for her bridal noon,  
And o'er the garden bend, its pearl-crowned queen.

A WAYFARER.

### Life and Letters.

#### ARIEL ON LICENCE.

WHEN King Alonso's ship was sinking in the storm, a strange phenomenon appeared. Now on the beak, now in the waist, the deck, in every cabin, it flamed amazement. Sometimes it would divide, and burn in many places. On the topmast, the yards, and bowsprit, it would flame separately, then meet and join. But when the King's son had struggled to shore, he found the thing had turned to music and he wondered whether it was in the air or the earth. Then it sounded no more, and he was sure it waited upon some god of the island. And a monster whom his servants met told them not to be frightened; for, he said:—

"The isle is full of noises,  
Sounds, and sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not.  
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments  
Will hum about mine ears; and sometime voices,  
That, if I then had waked after long sleep,  
Will make me sleep again; and then, in dreaming,  
The clouds, methought, would open, and show riches  
Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked  
I cry'd to dream again."

And, hearing this description, the King's butler, Stephano, who was inclined to drink, observed that this would be a brave kingdom for him, where he would have his music for nothing. And yet there are some who say there is no such thing as prophecy! It will be seen that upon one point only has the prophet been mistaken. Stephano will not get his music for nothing. He will have to pay ten shillings for a licence to hear it, and as he was addicted to drink, we presume he would also require a "Fool-proof Receiver," which would cost him about £6 at present estimate.

Then comes the important question what music he is likely to hear in this our enchanted isle. Will he hear the tune of his own catch, "Flout 'em and scout 'em," played "by the picture of Nobody"? He could hardly expect in modern England, with its passion for Free Verse, to hear the same kind of music as "Come to these yellow sands," or "Full fathom five," or "Where the bee sucks." But he might very well listen to the elevated

cadence and dying fall of a political speech, or the result of the Cup Tie, or the latest odds on the Derby, which would interest him far more. The "Times" has sent a special correspondent to investigate the subject in America, and the other day he wrote from New York that, after a few minutes' instruction at "sitting at a preposterous little twin-box with its small battery and round handles," he picked up and listened to "scraps of concerts, lectures, sermons, announcements of baseball results, weather reports, and the like from half a dozen broadcasting stations scattered over an area of several hundred miles." That sounds like fine confused mental feeding. In England we should substitute football for baseball, and racing for lectures, but still no licence-holder could complain of specialism or narrow prejudice in the performance. In the United States already, the correspondent tells us, there are 1,500,000 receiving instruments in action, one-third being home-made, and he estimates that between 6,000,000 and 7,000,000 American citizens of all ages and both sexes daily "listen in." It is a solemn thought. At least one-twentieth of the whole population is daily receiving this variety of pleasurable knowledge and accurate information. The American "public schools" will hardly be needed long, and "continuation classes" for adults may be closed. The British wandering lecturer there will address seven million people in place of seven hundred, and his fee, we hope, will be multiplied ten thousand times. Youth and crabbed age will learn together, and the monotony of Main Street become a myth.

Nor is it necessary for each "listener in" to have a receiver and enjoy only in isolation of the ear. It is no case of one man one sound. When America was laying to rest (one hopes his final rest!) the travelled bones of her Unknown Warrior, the enormous crowds in and around the vast theatre of classic marble at Arlington beheld the figure of the President reading his speech far off upon the open-air stage. Perhaps, if near enough, they could see his lips move, but not a sound issued from that direction. Louder than life, the words were borne in upon them from every quarter of the air and sky. Four great wooden or metal tubes, called amplifiers, carried them from the President's mouth to all the surrounding atmosphere. And not only that: other forms of magic carried them to amplifiers far away, and the patriot citizens of Chicago, New Orleans, St. Louis, San Francisco, New York, Boston, and all the other greatest cities of the world listened awestruck to their President's eloquence almost simultaneously with those who saw him speaking.

In our little island we may not afford opportunities either for such eloquence or for such distribution of it, but think what might be done in a parallel case! Last Sunday, Mr. St. John Ervine lectured to the inhabitants of Wormwood Scrubbs Prison upon literary subjects. After an admirable and instructive address, which was received with great applause, we read that an interesting discussion arose among the prisoners upon the character of Kit Marlowe (in whose criminal propensities some of the audience felt the touch of human nature), and upon the art of Miss Ethel M. Dell, who appeared to some of the gaol-birds to have been shabbily treated by the lecturer. The audience, we read, consisted of about five hundred only, but why should it not now be almost indefinitely extended? A simple receiver, with amplifier, megaphone, or horn attachment, placed in each of our prisons, would have diffused Mr. Ervine's lecture to as many thousand criminals as the law has managed to



secure, and would have incalculably increased the pleasure and mental improvement of their incarceration. For everyone who has shared their position knows that dullness is the most wretched part of their penalty, and in comparison with that dullness the monotony of Main Street is almost exhilarating.

Already our social reformers begin to foresee a Golden Age when England will again be merry and her peasants blithe. Every parson and squire, we are convinced, will gladly contribute for a receiver, with horn attachment, to be placed in the school or reading room of every village, while in each church an instrument will echo the sacred music of the Albert Hall. This entertainment will keep the laborer on the land and maintain or possibly increase the number of the congregations. In our mind's eye, we can see the picture now—the benches in the stuffy room crammed with work-worn men and women, listening, as evening falls, to the Fifth Symphony at that moment resounding in Queen's Hall, or to Mr. Lloyd George explaining his policy of the moment to an obsequious House of Commons, or to Mr. Bottomley discoursing on the ethics of patriotism in Portland's distant air. Who can doubt that charms like these, in Goldsmith's words, would make even toil to please? Already we see the grimy artisans of the manufacturing cities flocking back to the healthy fields for merriment and intellectual growth. As in some picture by Walter Crane or Frederick Walker, we see the interesting young Balliol man, in Liberty smock, following the plough-tail in the purple field, or, beside deep-bosomed maidens, driving the motor wain at harvest home, while pipe and tabor vibrate through the air from the nearest broadcasting station.

Of course, there are troubles ahead. If all England can hear—whom shall we say?—singing every night in the week, what is to become of others who sing? If people can hear the best speakers and want to hear no other, what is to become of the local M.P.? If everyone wants to hear Dean Inge, why should cheery parsons preach? If all the land can hear the news from Fleet Street every morning and evening, what will become of the newspapers? If—whom shall we say?—secures the monopoly of broadcasting news, what will become of truth? If someone else secures the weekly commentary on events, what will become of us? If broadcast advertisement is put to the highest bidder, shall we have nothing but this man's Soap or the other man's Liver Pills? Who is to fix the daily or the hourly programme for the country as a whole? The "Times" writer solemnly says, "The Government should not permit the use of a receiving instrument on any licensed premises" (meaning public-house or hotel, we suppose; for every receiving instrument must stand in premises licensed to have one); "and," he goes on, "the Government must see to it that whatever is broadcasted is of the best, whether it be dance music, concerts, lectures, or general information." That sounds all very nice and proper, but what Government could we trust to decide what is of the best? Shall the same official decree our dance music, our concerts, our lectures, and our general information? If not, we foresee a pretty considerable Ministry of Experts and Specialists, and in the hands of each an incalculable power for good or evil. But our experience of the official propagandist for Government does not prove that the best and the true will necessarily prevail.

As to the method and nature of this new enchantment, the present writer remains entirely ignorant. His comfort is that everyone whom he consults displays an ignorance almost equally profound. There are some

phenomena which he must be content to accept as miracles that do happen, just as he accepts the rabbit issuing from the conjurer's hat or the recent statement in these columns that there is such a thing as a time-triangle. He seeks his consolation in such sentences as that quoted a week or two ago in one of our articles from Professor Hermann Weyl's "Raum, Zeit, Materie":—

"It must be emphatically stated that the present state of physics lends no support whatever to the belief that there is a causality of physical nature which is founded on rigorously exact laws."

That sounds comforting. But when we read further that "surely no one can fail to see that these new conceptions promise not only fascinating regions for thought, but a new liberation of the human spirit," we can only reply that, in regard to the spirit's liberation, all will depend upon what use we shall ourselves make of this new and dangerous magic.

### THE AFFAIR OF HONOR.

EXPERIENCE teaches us that clear thinking is seldom found either in *littérateurs* or in politicians, and there is no reason to expect it from one who is both, like M. Hanotaux, the distinguished Frenchman who makes such an interesting revelation of the state of mind of his countrymen, in a contribution to the second Reconstruction Supplement of the "Manchester Guardian." Englishmen cannot understand why France is so "unreasonable," and all attempts to explain made by her friends have only increased our difficulty. Why does France threaten to plunge Europe into a new war? "It is fear of German armed recovery," say some. "It is the necessities of her public finance, early large reparation," say others. "It is the unslaked craving to inflict merited punishment upon the ravisher of France," say yet others. The brutal Briton answers, "You cannot get security, or reparations, or financial stability, or any other solid benefit, by perpetually brandishing the menace of invasion over Germany. It obliges you to keep in being enormous armies which you can't afford, to use up in expenses of occupation the money you might have for reparations, to continue paying your way by more internal loans, and to stop the whole Continent from getting on to a footing of peace and sound business. You would push all of us alike over the brink of ruin once again."

Now M. Hanotaux pours scorn upon these considerations of "economic hypothesis," much as Edmund Burke denounced the "sophisters, calculators, and economists" of his day. He finds that for "the average Frenchman sentiment is often a stronger driving force than all the economic combinations by which you set such store; and this sentiment is called, in French, *l'honneur*." It was this sentiment that drove "our poor *poilus* of twenty years and of twenty *sous* a day—to the slaughter on the Marne and at Verdun." Apparently it may drive more poor *poilus* any day to invade Germany.

"Just as the Russian may be stirred one day and the next and abandon himself to a mystical impulse, eluding every economic law, which will carry him onwards in incalculable vertiginous exaltation, so it may happen that the Frenchman, weary of so many humiliations and sophisms, will set his shoulder to the cart and overturn all the calculators, interested and disinterested, and march where honor calls him."

Now, that sentiment is a potent force in politics no one can deny. But M. Hanotaux goes further, and assigns it a rightful predominance. He would have the

*poilu* overturn the cart and "march where honor calls him," for that means obedience to the dictates of the "soul." Now "the great weakness of economic metaphysics is that it has no soul; and lacking a soul, it lacks Humanity."

An interesting corroboration of this charge against British materialism (for that is what it comes to) is found in an interview with M. Herriot, the radical Maire of Lyons, in last Sunday's "Observer":—

"Of course, we must recognize that after every war England has always wanted to resume normal relations immediately. Her political philosophy, her banking and commercial interests, and her highly organized trade-union movement all impel her in that practical direction which rather shocks our idealism."

Now what are this idealism and this sentiment of honor, in which England is so lacking and which thrive in France? We do not learn much by regarding them as "a mystical impulse," the token of "a soul." Let us rather inquire what conduct they enjoin. According to M. Herriot they bid us not to forgive our enemies, even if it is gainful to do so. But this is but a negative policy. M. Hanotaux envisages his young countrymen marching, perhaps this month, into an unarmed Germany to extort reparations under the call of *l'honneur*. Readers of his curious article will observe that M. Hanotaux is not what would be called a pure idealist. He keeps an eye on the main chance. His *poilu*, "marching where honor calls him," is after the reparations which the false Germans refuse to pay. He is to get the reparations in an honorable way.

Let us look a little closer at this point of honor. Economic calculators tell the Frenchman that he cannot get what he wants by his process of force, but honor teaches him better. Here M. Hanotaux vacillates between the view that the economists are deceitful pro-Germans, misrepresenting the palpable prosperity of Germany, and the view that honor is indifferent to such low objects as cash. But perhaps we get a little nearer to M. Hanotaux's meaning if we take the traditional attitude of the man of honor in his private quarrels. The ethic of duelling required him to refuse to submit his quarrel to a law court, but to treat it as a personal affront to be wiped out by blood, the issue being determined not upon the merits of the case, but in accordance with the respective fighting skill of the two parties. Some of this ethic apparently survives in M. Hanotaux's public honor. It would be base to submit the issue to some impartial arbiter, for it belongs to a people of honor to be judge in its own cause, and executioner as well. It would be mean to make our case conformable with economic calculations, for the wrong done to us is a matter that lies outside calculations. Our enemy must pay for the damage he has done. To say he cannot is irrelevant. He must, and honor bids us make him.

Even in duelling, honor figured as a substitute for justice. But M. Hanotaux's call of honor goes further. For honor in duelling required that our enemy should be armed and equal to us in every opportunity of fighting. Not so with the gallant march into Germany to which honor may call Frenchmen any day. Honor here signifies the enforcement of sham justice upon an unarmed enemy. For this huge reparation that is demanded stands upon a double falsification: a sham assessment of damages, and a sham estimate of German capacity to pay, both performed by an *ex-parte* Commission. Since every element of injustice inheres in the policy, there may seem to be a certain moral consistency in demanding that force shall be its executant.

But there is another point in which this honor falls below that of duelling. The duellist not merely felt the

prick of honor in his own breast, but ran the risk of feeling the prick of his adversary's sword. Not so our political "idealists." M. Hanotaux and his aged friends will send "our poor *poilus* of twenty years" to the slaughter, filling them with this poisonous passion. For it is entirely false to suggest that a spontaneously generated sense of honor drove these millions of young Frenchmen to the slaughter-ground, or would drive them into Germany after reparations. This honor, which in its ultimate analysis is a compound of combativeness, pride, place-sentiment, gregariousness, and fear, worked up by conscious education into a vague but genuine sentiment of nationalism, would never of itself suffice to bring about the dire results that come from its apparent supremacy. No. The stimulation, management, and direction of this fund of honor in the young belong to the art or craft of high politics and of its elderly practitioners. The men who would have the *poilu* "march where honor calls," and who utter the call, are not M. Herriot's "idealists," who throw calculation to the dogs. On the contrary, they are the political and business schemers who fasten themselves upon the generous and combative instincts of youth in order to exploit them for their selfish ends. These men are still alive. They have survived the war which slew so many millions of their victims. They still sit in the seats of the mighty with their hands upon the levers of power, and their lips upon the trumpet of "honor," waiting for the next time when they may serve their interests (represented as their country's interests) at the cost of others' lives. For, with a curious inconsequence, our idealist is constantly alighting from his "vertiginous exaltation" on to the solid earth. The most striking passage in M. Hanotaux's article is an appeal for sympathy for the *maire* of his native village, who, more than three years after the war has ended, is still living in the cellar of his unrepaid house. Is not this shameful? Should not Germany have been required to make good her ravages ere this? The true answer, of course, is that France would not let her make such reparation in the only way that was possible. Why? Because French misrulers prefer the grievance to the remedy, as yielding more idealism and a fuller appeal to honor, when they next decide to call upon the young to march.

## Sketches of Travel.

### LECCE

#### II.

THE palace next to the church, joined to it, is equally elaborate. Two stories high, the windows are divided by pilasters of cut stone, rising from the ground with incredible grace. The windows are works of rich fantasy, tapering into strange patterns, culled from the common sights of the Leccese countryside, from the full curl of the cabbage leaf, as lovely as any acanthus, from the swags of purple flowers that drop formally from each side of a swelling Spanish balcony, from the wreaths and strings of tomatoes that are hung up to dry on the white village houses in the rich sunlight of the autumn. All these things are converted into formal patterns by a great genius; for Timbalo was that, certainly, as was his contemporary Wren. The general effect of these two buildings is so new, so strange, that it seems the architecture of another planet. But where else, except at Venice, can you find two adjacent buildings, of varying periods, so different and yet so harmonious?

One good building—here there are a thousand—one touch of imagination, can improve the style of an entire



town, especially if that town is not recognized as an art centre. Venice, for instance, is known to be one of the world's most beautiful cities. Immediately an army of upholsterers invade it, putting the old capitals of the pillars into the dark interior of museums, where they wait for the Judgment Day in dust and silence, substituting new ones they have cut themselves in their art studies, converting palaces into newly mosaicked mansions for the profiteer, inflicting a thousand little tortures of brick and stone, but mostly of marble, on the unsuspecting corpse of the city. Its palaces and churches become the model for every gas-work and sewage-farm in Europe. Venice is spoilt, and the gas-work loses its chance of a beauty that is engineering.

Brighton, on the other hand, has no reputation as an art-centre, but possesses, quite unsuspected by its citizens of course, one building, not of the highest order, but none the less with a touch of imagination, especially visible in its interior decoration. This palace has nobly influenced the common architecture of Brighton, and when the casual visitor, walking along the sea-front, wonders why Brighton has a certain charm, why this arcade is rather graceful, why this cornice is less hideous, this railing less vile, than it would be in London, the answer is—Brighton Pavilion! But the upholsterers here have not found this out, though the Pavilion would give them a style nearer to upholstery than that which they generally make use of. The lesson, which one hopes Venice will one day take to heart, is that Waring & Gillows and the Little Art-Shops are the menace, and not the poetry of Signor Marinetti and his disciples.

However, to return to the sparkling voices and shrill cries of the South, Lecce has a thousand beautiful buildings and no reputation; it has therefore never indulged in the intricacies of Venetian or Chinese Gothic, or in any variant of restaurant-car architecture. The lovely florid style of the early eighteenth century gradually refined itself into the shepherdess lines of 1780, and then into plainly built, simple houses.

The town also possessed a school of painters, rather in the Veronese tradition, the last of whom, Orrigo Tiso, died as lately as 1800. In the picture gallery there are few notable works, but there are some pleasant ones in the Liceo Reale, formerly a Jesuit convent. Here, indeed, is one remarkable picture—remarkable perhaps more for subject than treatment, though it is quite a well-painted work.

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, Southern Italy produced a horde of miracle-workers and saints. To one of the most extraordinary of these we are introduced by Mr. Norman Douglas, in his delightful book "Old Calabria." We refer to San Giuseppe di Copertina, the Flying-Monk. This brown-clad brother, who should be the patron saint of the Air Force, could fly in at any door or window without the aid of mechanical contrivances. His secret apparently died with him—but he was canonized.

San Giuseppe was born at Copertina, a few miles from Lecce, and here, in the Liceo, what was our delight to find a hitherto unrecorded portrait of this remarkable man, doing a trial flight, with even, perhaps, a suspicion of latter-day "stunting." Clad in his brown habit, the reverend gentleman is in mid-air, with arms stretched out, high up, inclining, if one may use the expression, to a nose-dive, while an elegant assembly of Lecce ladies and gentlemen of the middle eighteenth century, in white wigs and delightfully gay brocades, watch him with mingled interest and anxiety.

The other pictures in the building are not so interesting; but there are some frescoes in various churches by the Verrio family, who, hailing from Lecce, eventually transferred some of the miracles of the South on to the walls and ceilings of the country houses of England.

After the Piazza della Prefettura, the most beautiful piazza in the town is that outside the Cathedral, a fine building of the early sixteenth century. It is a square full of palaces, one of which, the Seminario, rivals the Prefettura, and is the work of Cino, the pupil of Timbalo, who built it about 1705. Here, also, is the Archbishop's Palace, a delightful loggia'd building of the middle of the same century, less rich but equally

elegant. The whole square has only one opening, tapering to a very graceful gateway opposite the Cathedral.

It was our good fortune to see this great square illuminated on the night of Good Friday. The Church dares to move with the times in the fanatic atmosphere of Southern Italy, and a lavish use was made of electric light. By the side of the Cathedral, a large plaster grotto, brilliantly lit, displayed the various tragic scenes of Our Lord's life. All the palaces and houses were decorated with lines and garlands of light. Trumpets brayed mournfully in the distance, and from the darkness of the streets came a procession of strange figures, some of whom held high up the illuminated Sacred Images and relics. All the men were masked, figures from some ballet of Callot, or a drawing of the Inquisition by Della Bella or Goya. Some were dressed in flowing black, with wide black hats, their eyes gleaming through the two slits in the long black cloth that fell over their faces. Some were dressed in light blue and pink, a sort of shirt of blue and coat of pink, with large red hats, like the hats of Cardinals; others wore robes of silk and purple. Then came an army of children, singing in time to the slow waltz played by the band that followed, singing in the peculiarly nasal shrill voice of the South. The thousands of lights showed up the intricacy of the architecture above. The gloomy, bearded face of a monk peered down from an upper window, framed in a triumphant swirl of mermaids, roses, and cupids, while the procession slowly filed round the square and then out again into the darkness.

OSBERT SITWELL.

## Letters to the Editor.

### GENERAL WRANGEL AND OURSELVES.

SIR,—I wish to inform you that General Wrangel has read the article headed "Wrangel" and written by Brig.-General Thomson which appeared in the number of THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM dated May 6th of the current year.

Dismissing without comment various inaccurate statements concerning both himself personally and divers aims and opinions ascribed to him by General Thomson, General Wrangel cannot allow the imputation concerning his "bitter hostility towards the French" to pass unchallenged, this imputation being in striking contrast to the true state of things.

General Wrangel cannot help remembering with feelings of deep gratitude the assistance rendered by France to those of his companions-in-arms who shared his exile. Allowing that a certain bitterness might exist on General Wrangel's part with regard to certain representatives of the French High Command in Constantinople, a bitterness caused by the incompetent and maybe tactless methods employed by the latter in carrying out the decisions of the French Government regarding the fate of General Wrangel's companions-in-arms, he in no case confounded these officials with France herself, who has ever in the past been a trusty ally to Russia.

Sharing his belief with the majority of his fellow-countrymen, General Wrangel is firmly convinced that in the future, upon Russia's delivery from Bolshevik tyranny, those ties of close friendship which unite Russia with France will once more be consolidated.

In conclusion, allow me to express the hope that, governed by the impartiality which ever characterized the weekly edited by you, you will find it possible to publish the present letter in its columns.—Yours, &c.,

N. KOTLIAREVSKY,

Secretary to General Baron Wrangel.

Sremsky-Karlovitz (Jougo-Slavia).

May 22nd, 1922.

[General Wrangel admits bitterness towards the representatives of the French High Command who were carrying

out the policy of the French Government in Constantinople. That this bitterness did not extend to "France herself" is quite possible, and the article does not suggest that it did. The suggestion made is that Wrangel, in view of the bitterness which he admits, would not willingly work in leading strings "whose ends were pulled in Paris," i.e., by the Government whose policy towards his companions-in-arms he had so bitterly resented.—ED., THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM.]

#### A QUESTION OF CRITICAL ETHICS.

SIR,—May I draw attention to a detail in the procedure of your critic "H. J. M." in your ATHENÆUM section of May 27th? Lauding the work of Mr. Clutton-Brock on "Shakespeare's 'Hamlet,'" he quotes that critic as saying he was "provoked to write it by the theories of Mr. J. M. Robertson and Mr. T. S. Eliot that 'Hamlet' is not a masterpiece, but a failure"; adding, as I understand him, the implication that I had said "Hamlet" is "a bad play"; and then pronouncing, on his own account, that "If Mr. Robertson is right, he proves, of course, not only that 'Hamlet' is a failure, but that Shakespeare, by pickling all the irrelevancies, makes a sub-editor who couldn't earn his living in Fleet Street."

Now, it is the fact that Mr. Clutton-Brock, on the first page of his preface, represents me as affirming or implying that "Hamlet" is "not a masterpiece at all, but an accident"—the term "failure" being assignable to Mr. T. S. Eliot. But, a few pages further on, Mr. Clutton-Brock correctly quotes me as saying that "Hamlet" is "a masterpiece," and "a magnificent *tour de force*." It is for Mr. Clutton-Brock to justify the expedient of leaving his first statement standing after quoting the passage which disproves it. But what is the justification of your critic for making his assertion, with Mr. Clutton-Brock's counter-evidence before him; and for carrying on his own work of aspersion *without having examined my book*? Had he read it, he would have been aware that the eulogy of "Hamlet" as a masterpiece is the burden of its summing-up; and that its total purport is a confutation of the "Ptolemaic" methods (to which order belong Mr. Clutton-Brock's) by which the play is interpreted without any regard to the facts of its genesis and composition.

Your critic, aspersing a work he has not read (in the manner of the average English professional critic), bestows upon me some compliments in order to introduce the judgment that I lack "a quality you cannot really leave out in appreciating Shakespeare—the faculty of experiencing a work of art." That judgment, I fancy, is less readily demonstrable than is my rejoinder that your critic is an enthusiastic ignoramus. His compliments include the terms "extremely acute," "fair," "honest advocate"; but the last, in particular, leaves me uneasy, as lacking authority. For where is the honesty in aspersing a book without having examined it? The initials "H. J. M." are for me associated with the personality of an obviously well-meaning humanitarian. But humanitarianism is, unfortunately, no guarantee either for critical rectitude or for critical competence. And to lack either of these is to lack a qualification which "you cannot really leave out in appreciating" even a book you *have* read.

Your critic writes that "Mr. Robertson is not difficult to tackle, because the light and shade of his approach to Shakespeare are so very discernible." Now, he has apparently not even noted the flat self-contradiction in Mr. Clutton-Brock's account of my "approach"; and if he should allege that he *has* examined my book (which I do not understand him to claim), he will be still less "difficult to tackle" as a critic in the seat of judgment. For, in that case, he would be guilty of falsifying the purport of a treatise which repeatedly maintains the opposite of the doctrine he ascribes to it.

Mr. Asquith has recently (with, as I think, complete justification) applied the term "falsehood" to a statement by another journalist. That, however, was in a matter of politics, where partisanship so notoriously often overrides the spirit of truth in journalism. In matters of literary criticism, one might hope to find a generally higher standard. Am I (an old journalist) really exceptional in holding that

the deliberate—or is that term also inapplicable?—aspersion of a book one has not read is an offence against critical morals? Of course, it does not unfit a humanitarian to "earn his living in Fleet Street"; but ethics surely does not end with humanitarian emotion.—Yours, &c.,

J. M. ROBERTSON.

24, Pembroke Gardens, W. 8.

#### THE EXCLUSION OF CANADIAN CATTLE.

SIR,—It has been my fate in the last few months to listen to many strange and shifting arguments in favor of what is called the Embargo; but surely the one used by my old friend the "Wayfarer," in his Diary of last week, was the strangest of them all. At this moment (so ran the argument) the British Farmer has—or has had—but two props left him—milk and store cattle. These are—or have been—"his main, almost his only hope." One of them, milk, has already gone, seized by a wicked and unscrupulous combine; and now those two supermen, Lords Beaverbrook and Northcliffe, more wicked and unscrupulous still, are preparing to take the other also; and will bring down the poor old British farmer, with sorrow and with ruin, to his grave. Shades of Townshend and of Coke! Has it really come to this? This famous British industry, once the glory of the country and the example of the world—at whose fat beasts in Smithfield Market we have so often gazed in wondering awe, and from whose pedigree herds of cattle, horses, sheep, and pigs, the progeny has gone forth to every quarter of the globe—is it indeed so miserably reduced that it must rely for its existence on the raising of store cattle, and requires protection even for that? I knew things were bad. The drought, the drop in prices, the action of the combine, have all hit the farmer badly. But this seems almost too bad to be true.

Well, speaking merely as a farmer, it is always pleasant to be an object of solicitude, and I have read "Wayfarer's" Diary so long, and with such pleasure, that I like to think he cares for me. But if he really wants to help and protect me, wouldn't it be better to begin, so to speak, at the other end? After all, this store beast, if he is to be an effective prop, must some day or other be made fat enough to kill; and this fattening process will presumably have to be carried out by a British farmer, who will have to sell him in the open market, in competition with frozen meat, and imported meat, and tinned meat, all of which the British public, through the lure of low prices, is, unfortunately, misguided enough to buy. Does "Wayfarer" propose to exclude these also? Or, if not, why would he prevent me from buying my store cattle where and how I like, assuming, of course, that there is no reasonable risk of their being diseased? Even the Tariff Reformers, as I seem to remember their arguments in those happy, far-off days before the war, would never have advocated such an illogical policy. It was not their intention to keep up by legislation the price of the half-finished product, and yet leave the man who finished it to his fate. The Tariff Reformers were at least courageous. They boasted of their science. They were prepared to do the thing thoroughly. Surely "Wayfarer," to use his own phrase, will not put only his left hand to the plough?

But perhaps I have unconsciously misread his argument. Can it be that "Wayfarer," like the sensible man he is, has seen all along the pernicious folly of this piece of "left-hand Protection," and merely believes that Lord Beaverbrook and Lord Northcliffe, in their hasty enthusiasm, have chosen the wrong time for getting it removed? Does he seriously think that a time is coming when the protected interests will no longer raise their clamor, when the widow and the orphan—I mean the smallholder and the yeoman—will no longer be made to appeal for our pity, and the Government will quietly redeem their pledge, amidst the cheers of their supporters and a sigh of relief from us all? Well, it may be so; but I doubt it.

The fact is that when once the argument for excluding these cattle on the score of disease has been abandoned, there is no other valid or consistent argument left. The rest is all prejudice and appeal to sentiment. No doubt the change of policy, whenever it comes, will bring some temporary loss and inconvenience. But nothing could be worse than a continuance of the present uncertainty. If the change must



come—as I believe it must—then the sooner it comes the better.—Yours, &c.,

PHILIP MORRELL.

["WAYFARER" writes: "Of course, the Embargo is indefensible, and I never defended it. But I think its removal at this hour will, if I may say so with great deference, hurt Farmer Giles rather more than Mr. Morrell supposes."]

#### THE GERMANS IN CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

SIR,—“A Traveller’s” letter on “The Germans in Czecho-Slovakia,” in last week’s THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM, calls for comment. “A Traveller” denies that an attempt has been made forcibly to impose Czech names on the thoroughfares of German Bohemian towns. Such is indeed the case. By a law of April 14th, 1920, and an ordinance dated August 25th, 1921, it has been enacted that the nomenclature of streets, squares, &c., falls within the competency of the municipalities. But if another language than Czecho-Slovak is chosen, then (a) in municipalities with at least 20 per cent. Czecho-Slovak citizens, (b) in municipalities where courts of law or branches of political administration are situated, and (c) in health resorts, streets and public squares must be named also in the “language of the State,” i.e., in Czecho-Slovak, and the Czech name must be given before the name in any other language. It is, therefore, absolutely contrary to fact to imply that health resorts like Carlsbad or Marienbad, purely German communities, have voluntarily chosen Czech street-names; they are compelled to do so. Here are two characteristic samples of Czech interpretation of this law: There is in Silesia a purely German town Freiwalldau (the few Czechs living there are officials, gendarmes, military, purposely sent there). In order to compel Freiwalldau to give Czech names to its streets, it was by the Government declared to be a “health resort,” because there are, indeed, two health resorts near Freiwalldau. Braunau (a town in Eastern Bohemia) even to-day, in spite of the officially fostered increase of the Czech population, is five-sixths German. To be on the safe side the municipality decided to introduce the American system of designating streets by numerals. The Government stepped in, demanded the removal of the new street-plates, and the allegedly autonomous municipality refusing to comply, the street-plates were forcibly removed by gendarmes and the expense charged to the municipality.

“A Traveller” is similarly mistaken when he says that the complaints of the Germans of Bohemia refer to regions where the Germans remain a small numerical minority. Quite the contrary: the Germans complain of their treatment in those parts of Czecho-Slovakia where they live, and have been living for centuries, in compact numbers, and as a compact majority. They complain that the minority clause of the Czech education law of April 8th, 1919, is used in order to force upon purely German districts Czech schools at the expense of the German rate- and tax-payers. There have been cases where such Czech minority schools in German districts have been started for ten, eight, and even four and two children. Using this law in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, a great number of minority schools, practically all Czech, have been created, but more than 13,000 classes in German board and secondary schools abolished. Only in Slovakia new German schools or classes have been permitted.

Without in the least doubting “A Traveller’s” *bona fides* and desire to be impartial, it must, unfortunately, be said that his whole outlook is vitiated by his accepting without criticism the Czech view as expressed in the sentence: “The roots of Switzerland are cantonal, while here (in Czecho-Slovakia) the State is unified.” Now, employing this argument is merely begging the question, because the Germans do not want a centrally governed Czecho-Slovakia, but a Czecho-Slovakia composed of autonomous parts. But more than that. Reading “A Traveller’s” words, one might think that Czecho-Slovakia has been a unified country since the dawn of history, and that the Germans are tilting against the accumulated hard facts of history and tradition. As a matter of fact, the Czecho-Slovak State is an invention of the Peace Treaties, and the constitution of this absolutely new State was passed by a non-elected Rump Parliament, from which Germans and other non-Czechs had been carefully excluded, although the Czech leaders had definitely and

plainly promised to the statesmen of the Allied Powers that the constitution of the new State, created by the grace and as the gift of the Allied Powers, would be passed by a proper constituent assembly. But if “A Traveller’s” remarks refer to that old State, the lands of the Bohemian Crown, then he ought to remember that Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, the three component parts of that State, were practically independent, each with its own Estates and its own finances, having, indeed, little in common but the Crown; not to mention that the present Czecho-Slovakia contains parts that never were under the old Bohemian Crown, like the purely German town and district of Eger (Bohemia), which was only pawned to the King of Bohemia, or those purely German parts of Lower Austria that by the Peace Treaty were torn away from Austria and given to Czecho-Slovakia, though they had neither nationally nor historically the slightest connection with the Czechs.—Yours, &c.,

ANOTHER TRAVELLER.

### Poetry.

#### THE ECLOGUE.

So talk ran on, and turning like a lane  
Discovered meetings loved and left behind,  
And pleasure common once came peeping plain,  
A sunshine through the late mists of the mind;  
Leading these two to warm nigh into song  
Upon the river where they dwelt so long;

The ancient river flowing on among  
Sweet hopgrounds and their aisles of tasselled vines,  
Old crooked orchards, fruit-plats straight and young—  
How gently to his sea his wave declines!  
Vexed into whirlpools where the sluices roar,  
But in a field’s length easy as before.

The son, drowsed in imagination stern,  
Shaped his remembrance dark and breathless; cries  
A sullen god beside a mumbling urn,  
A hungry blackness full of evil eyes;  
Sees the wind warp, the eddy swirl askance,  
As marks of water-witches on their dance.

The very eels seen through his eyes become  
Sorcerers, oafish bream grow more than wise,  
A babel of tongues shrieks from the shallows dumb,  
Weeds coil a web of death for human flies:  
Terror would bear him on swift wings away,  
But dizzy wonder still would have him stay.

But when the father spoke, the stream was flowing  
Innocent on as pasturing flocks beside,  
A gentle giant moping not nor mowing,  
Heaven’s looking-glass with heaven’s white pageant pied;  
So sweet companionship he never knew  
In morning’s sun or evening’s rosy dew.

There the vole sunned him by the pollard’s heel,  
The pollard scored with tow-rope’s telling groove;  
Far down the flood the singing bells would peal,  
The bells would peal, the silver swans would move,  
Between the water-mosses’ warm green beds,  
Where harmless fish could hide their simple heads.

The youth that saw these things and would not see  
Peopled the waterholes with passion’s dream,  
And brought the deathbell moaning over the lea  
To cry his “Drowned, drowned, drowned!” against the  
stream,  
And gazed the daemon in his watery meuse,  
And swoln ghosts ever starting from the ooze.

But ever in the pauses of his son  
The old man set his bright against the dark,  
Numbering his curious beauties one by one,—  
Straight as a ploughman driving on his mark,  
Through storms, through stubs, through stones his  
furrow guiding,—  
Seeing below calm trees calm waters gliding.

EDMUND BLUNDEN.

## The Week in the City.

(BY OUR CITY EDITOR.)

THURSDAY.

THE coincidence of a certain race meeting in Surrey with the approach of the Whitsuntide holiday, which, if the weather holds, is likely to be extended at both ends by many City men, has been in some measure responsible for Stock Market quietude this week. Home Rails in the early days were again the chief feature, while French issues recovered confidence; for the City proved to have been correct in dismissing fears of a fresh Reparations crisis and separate action by France to-day against Germany. More and more as time passes, the financial world realizes the prime importance of a sane Reparations settlement as a first step towards European recovery, and in the matter of Reparations City sentiment has recently swung round from pessimism to modest hope. This change, as I hinted last week, is in the main due to the idea that the German Loan Committee will incidentally open the door to eventual settlement. Its deliberations may take a long time—much longer than Parisians contemplate—and they may fail. But at the moment argument appears to run fairly soundly on the following lines. Germany's accommodating reply to the Reparations Commission is proof of her eagerness to obtain an external loan and of her recognition that she can best hope to obtain it if she shows as reasonable an attitude as possible in the eyes of the world. Equally, France is beginning to see that the only hope of large and quick receipts for reconstruction expenses lies in Germany's ability to raise an external loan, and further that potential lenders will not lend unless they see what they believe to be a proper Reparations settlement. From these aspects the chances of progress appear to be better than for some time past; and as a symptom both French francs and German marks have shown improvement.

### THE FIRST POST-WAR ACCOUNT.

The first contango days since July, 1914—for mining shares on Monday and other descriptions on Tuesday—produced very little excitement. The first carry-over account under the restored facilities is obviously insignificant in aggregate when compared with pre-war experience, and also in most individual securities; but some considerable use of the facilities was made in connection with Home Railway stocks and one or two industrial favorites. The experience of the first settlement vindicates the majority prediction that the growth of speculative business would be very gradual at the outset. Under present conditions, increase will probably continue to be slow; but the appearance of a few favorable factors may make a quick change in the position. Brightening of the chances of Reparations settlement would go far to increase faith in trade improvement; and a very probable prelude to trade improvement would be Stock Market activity. A settlement of the long engineering dispute would help. Moreover, the investor's confidence would be improved by a further reduction in Bank Rate, which is held to be justified by present conditions, was expected in some quarters this week, and is a decided possibility in the near future. But there are still many "ifs" in the Stock Market outlook.

### THE FINANCE BILL DEBATE.

The debates on the Finance Bill in the House of Commons have done practically nothing towards changing the first impressions of the Budget conceived by various sections of opinion. Mr. Asquith's censure on the Chancellor for tampering with the Sinking Fund finds favor with orthodox financial purists. And, although the need for lower taxation is in many quarters a conviction based on formidable premises, there is a minority among financiers and economists who hold with the Labor Party that to economize and use resultant surpluses for debt reduction is the proper programme for the Chancellor, and one that would most effectively release money for trade and industry. The capital levy proposal moved by Colonel Wedgwood is, of course, abhorrent to City opinion, and those who might a while back have acquiesced on grounds of justice in a levy on war wealth, now hold that the time has gone by when any sort of capital tax can be experimented with in this country

without the gravest danger. If—and, of course, City opinion as a whole, as distinct from the opinion of economists, would never approach such a concession—a capital levy was ever the right policy, the opportunity has gone by. To take another point, it could hardly have been expected that the City would agree with Labor's description of this year's financial programme as a "rich man's Budget."

### RAILWAY RATES AND DIVIDENDS.

Railway interests, in the face of the outcry for lower rates, advance an interesting argument in favor of their being permitted to maintain their ordinary dividends at a substantial level. Some railway preference stocks are trustee securities, but cease to be so if dividends on the ordinary stocks have not, for a stated number of years, been maintained above a certain level. The importance of not removing such preference stocks from the trustee category is advanced as an argument in the controversy over the question whether railway rates should be so framed as to give the railways a standard revenue. Rates must be so framed, so runs this branch of the railway case, in order that ordinary dividends may be maintained at a steady rate that will secure the trustee standing for certain preference stocks. This argument is one which the Rates Tribunal will doubtless consider very carefully. But at the present moment there is an impression abroad that with Government compensation money in hand, and with the other resources available, there is a wide enough margin between immediate railway dividend probabilities and the level which must be maintained. But this really is a matter mainly of surmise. The buoyancy of home railway stocks, which has been the prominent feature of recent weeks on the Stock Exchange, does not suggest that investors have much doubt of present dividends being maintained, in spite of the powerful demand for lower rates. What is the truth? Is it possible for railway shareholders to be accorded just safeguards and, at the same time, for trade and industry to have the rate concessions for which they are thirsting? It is a question which, in the absence of up-to-date railway accounts, no layman can decide. Indeed, in view of the highly important railway rates discussion now going on, it is regrettable that the public should be entirely in the dark as to the contemporary position of British railway finances. In America, operating results are promptly published month by month. In this country in the ordinary way we can look for no railway accounts till next February. Cannot this position be remedied? Lack of information is peculiarly unfortunate at the present moment.

### NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The conviction of Bottomley, following on that of Hooley, should rub into the minds of gullible investors the lesson that, however small their resources, they should place their savings only according to sound rules of caution. They should not yield to the blandishments of eminent men to depart from such rules, nor, equally, should they, if they wish to be reasonably safe, use the circulars of touting and share-pushing agencies for any other purpose than lighting the kitchen fire. The smaller one's means, the greater the necessity for caution. The small investor should deal only through an accredited member of a Stock Exchange, a banker, or the Post Office Savings Bank. If this lesson were once learnt, thousands would be saved from loss and ruin, and men of the Bottomley and Hooley stamp, and the host of minor and less picturesque financial tempters, would turn to more salubrious lines of business.

The report of that great Lancashire textile concern, the Bleachers' Association, for the year ended March 31st last, shows a rise of £51,000 in trading profits to £950,138, and a rise in net profits of £139,000 to £653,888. The dividend for the year is raised from 10 per cent. to 12½ per cent.

The most interesting new issue of the week is the offer of £1,000,000 5½ per cent. Bonds at 99½ by the British Guiana Government which was quickly oversubscribed. The Compagnie Générale Transatlantique, a French shipping line, offers a fair foreign industrial security in its issue of £1,000,000 6½ per cent. sterling "obligations" at par.

L. J. R.





# THE ATHENÆUM

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## The World of Books.

It was evidently with joy that "S.", in his science article last week, found that he might allow Faraday, who is dead and cannot be hurt, to express the required scorn for the amount of scientific knowledge the 'buses take to popular lecture halls. The body of that knowledge may get in, as it were, without paying at the door—or so I gathered from the rudeness of the great Faraday; who was often, too, so nearly right that one had better know what one is about before mishandling anything he laid down.

\* \* \*

It does not astonish us that hardly a soul outside the laboratories and the studies knows what the problems are upon which some biologists and physicists are working with a fervor that, given to commerce or politics, would certainly bring notoriety. Success in commerce or politics is tangible enough for all of us to admire; but I hear that when it was necessary to interview Einstein in London recently, only one journalist could be found who could discuss Relativity with the great man in his own language, and afterwards write upon it in a way that could win the approval of both mathematical philosophers and the general reader. It may be true that when Time at last has cleared the rubbish from the good of the work we are doing, the importance of the Coalition Ministry, for instance, may glitter like a cast shard in a hedge, and Einstein shine as a fixed star of the first magnitude; but how should we guess that? Who is there to warn us?

\* \* \*

No, we cannot be expected to guess it. No doubt there is tremendously significant work being done in corners more or less dark, which may affect the destiny of humanity. Perhaps with some trouble we could discover what it is, and with more travail learn what it means. But how could we write upon it with the ease, interest, and conviction we give to flying stunts, Mr. Bottomley when weeping, Genoa and other prize fights, the heat wave, and the Derby? That is asking unfairly for more than can be given. But perhaps it would be fair to expect of the Press more interest in things not unimportant because they cannot be seen at a glance, and, in addition, an elementary knowledge of some of the subjects that are lumped under the ugly name of science. There are certainly more people to-day reading science in this country than racing news. It is true they never throw the ordinary services of the railway companies out of gear, and they have no reason to buy the

first editions of the London evening papers. But they exist. A few publishing houses have already discovered them, and in another year or two we may expect to hear of the fact in the "news." This general interest in the modern problems of science has not long been roused, and it may have enormously important social consequences. Suppose, now, a considerable body of the public grew doubtful, and at last contemptuous, of its old popular guides, and of the ignorance of the common run of statesmen and politicians? Suppose that at length it saw that Parliament had ceased to be even amusing, because it is too expensive an entertainment?

\* \* \*

SOME years ago such a work as "The Outline of Science" (Newnes, 32s.), the first volume of which has just been published, would have been unwarranted. It is edited by Professor J. Arthur Thomson, and it is written and overlooked by the right professional knowledge in each of its departments. It is true it does not assume much more in its readers than a preference for good English; but its matter requires close attention, which means interest and curiosity. This general curiosity, and a cheerful readiness to doubt old assumptions, and even to discard them, were first noticed on the publication of the "Outline of History." A demand grew then for a continuation of that very long story towards the latest images and conceptions of the full scientific mind of to-day. If the daily Press would care to learn what thoughts move in a multitude of its readers in addition to the satisfactory one that if they get knocked down by a motor-lorry it will be all right, then it would be well advised to examine closely this most successful venture of Messrs. Newnes. The Press would be surprised to learn how well a little care might serve it when allowing a scrap of science to appear in its columns; for nothing surprises intelligent children into mirth more than to note that when their parents' sacred morning paper tells of something *they* know, then it exposes its casual ignorance. Thus are little agnostics made; and the dark doubt may even be implanted which later may mock at the flood-gates of anarchy, the stake in the country, law and order, the honor of the nation, duty to the flag, and the other incantations which make a joss-house so solemn and disciplinary a temple.

\* \* \*

It is usually supposed that a small percentage of voters at an election means apathy. It may not. It may mean that the public is now beginning to understand the deplorable truth that hitherto it has been giving too much attention to the unworthy. It may be dawning upon us that while we have been spell-bound by the daunting uproar of politics and business interests (which are hard to separate, in such a noise), the best thought of the community and the most respect-worthy figures are either absent or obscured by the dust. We may be waiting for the dust to settle. We may be exhausted by the rhetoric and the emotion, and all the ruinous consequences of our late innocent faith and trust, and be now in a mood of tired but saving doubt about it all. Our interests are changing, and the quality and success of the "Outline of Science" is a sign and a warning to publicists.

H. M. T.

## Short Studies.

### ONLY TOO CLEAR.

#### III.

WELL, it is a free country; and anyone may take his mental ease who will. Only, if one is going to hold by absolute clearness, then one is going to shut oneself out from a good many things. For there are a good many things which cannot be expressed clearly without being expressed falsely. If everything in the shadowy corners of a Rembrandt interior were painted so that you could say just what it was, the painting would have lost its truth and its beauty. In literature there can be few better instances of the suggestive value of a certain avoidance of clearness than the songs of Shakespeare. The superficial unreason and inconsequence of the song that ends "Twelfth Night" is like a gay defiance of any thin rationalism in critics of poetry; it seems to flaunt in their faces a divine new clearness of its own, a clearness that passeth all understanding; for, beyond question, such a song calls up in us with unsurpassable distinctness the mood intended by its author, however incoherent the terms of the summons may seem to be; and it cannot have been by accident that Shakespeare, like Corot, wanted to have the mists in between our eyes and the landscape.

Where any such apparent obscurity is found in Shakespeare, he must have been writing with a field of consciousness so enlarged as to bring into view vital connections between things not visibly connected within any ordinary field of consciousness. Thus his utterance sometimes seems disconnected to us, and yet its connections are not wholly out of our reach; though not at all times available and at our command, still an understanding of them floats somewhere on the twilight border of our consciousness, and, when we are strongly fired by the beauty of Shakespeare's work, this sub-conscious recognition almost breaks through, so that even if we do not see that his underlying logic is perfect, we have a semi-mystic faith in it; we accept it, we cannot exactly say why.

From any such confession of faith in one great writer it is not a long step to the reflection that, in order to be very great, an imaginative writer should have some title to make similar calls upon faith, and that he should not avoid making them. Between the conscious and the sub-conscious there extend the waters in which he is licensed to pilot; and a pilot is always, to most of us, a person who does things which we imperfectly understand, with results upon which we rely. If a writer of powerful imagination is really making incursions far beyond the field of our ordinary consciousness, perhaps even far beyond that of his own consciousness in its uninspired, ordinary state, it is not only natural and permissible that his report of the results of these raids should call upon us for some effort of comprehension; you might even suspect, if it were all a transparently simple tale, that he had not gone very far.

There are, of course, some modern writers in whom this element of obscurity has attracted unusual notice, and whose popularity it has tended to limit. The case most often cited is that of Meredith, in whose work it is often difficult for the reader to see things clearly, not because there is a want of light, but because there seems to be too much of it; in him you see things with their outline blurred by excess of light, as you see the sun at mid-day. Meredith dazzles and dazes you, as Professor Elton says, with a "sparkling mist or spray of commentary, an emanation of bewildering light," which he sheds round the characters and events of his novels. Meredith, in making out these reports on his travels beyond the pale, pours out a turbid flood of illustrative images, one tumbling over the other, so that you feel rather like Benedick when Beatrice chaffed him—as he says, "huddling jest upon jest, with such impossible conveyance upon me that I stood like a man at a mark, with

a whole army shooting at me." It resembles to some extent the speech of certain characters in Shakespeare for whom one cannot help feeling that Shakespeare had a special liking—Mercutio, Falstaff, and the Biron of "Love's Labor's Lost," characters of an immense elation and gusto, whose abounding enjoyment of the human spectacle cannot always wait to complete one piece of self-expression before rushing on to another. And it seems possible that the ambiguities of Meredith, like the tumbled imagery of these most Shakespearian of Shakespeare's characters, may be the clearest practicable expression of a state of consciousness now only a little outside our reach, a state of intellectual high spirits and communicative quickness which could afford to be enormously elliptical in expressing itself, because everyone else's receivers would be perfectly tuned to receive its messages. One may even get glimpses to-day of small social groups of quick-witted and quick-sympathized people among whom, at moments of mutual stimulation, ideas can be exchanged in a condensed, highly figured code of speech, like Meredith's, without seeming opaque or contorted. And at such times one may easily feel that it is not all affectation or preciosity, but that perhaps these difficult people are only difficult because they know a thing or two more than we do.

Another modern writer sometimes charged with heresy by the high-priests of clearness is Mr. Yeats, in whom the obscurity is not the Meredithian dazzlement with excess of offered light, but a real dusk, wilfully courted. The wooing of this twilight has been repeatedly defended by Mr. Yeats on a quasi-spiritualist theory of composition which, I must own, leaves me standing still and wondering. But many people have their principles all bad and their practice all good. Though I can make little of Mr. Yeats's doctrine that poetry ought to be "got 'tween asleep and wake," as Edmund in "King Lear" describes the legitimate heirs, still one must admire the wanton heed and giddy cunning with which, both in verse and in prose, he edges lucidity, as it were, with a fringe of dimness, just as the clearly seen centre of the landscape that we spoke of is fringed with circles of the indistinct. If Mr. Yeats describes a wood in summer he can give you a sense of elfin presences within it; and when he expresses a mood, he gives you the impression of a small emergent and expressible part of a much larger, less definite whole, submerged first in semi-transparent sub-consciousness, and then in the opaque depths of still more rudimentary sub-consciousness, much as a little coral island or an iceberg is related to a far greater bulk under the sea. By constant renunciation of the obvious, tempting climax of a demonstration; by shunning the word or phrase which, in seeming to clinch a matter and hit a nail the last stroke on the head, gives the reader a delusive sense of finality where there is no finality; by heading off the kind of clearness which is only got by airily treating something unknown as if you knew it, Mr. Yeats may dissatisfy readers who crave for the universal cocksureness of bad journalism and of minor politics. But, after all, the attitude, the bearing towards a theme, is that of Socrates; it is that of Montaigne; and it is that of modern science, which, the further it goes, guards itself the more carefully against any assumption of having attained exhaustiveness and finality.

But Meredith and Mr. Yeats offer us only particularly obvious examples of a quality which in subtler forms is found in all highly imaginative writers. In some of the greatest this margin of enigmatic suggestion is conveyed under the most cunning semblance of absolute clearness. You know the lines of Burns:—

"The boat rocks at the pier of Leith,  
Fu' loud the wind blaws frae the ferry."

The whole song has an air of perfectly straight dealing with you; a child can understand the first intentions of all the words, but these seeming simplicities are craftily charged, by the manner of their choice and arrangement,



with ulterior suggestions evoking in you groups of ideas for which the more obvious significance of the words will not account. The same may be said of the much-quoted lines from Nash:—

"Brightness falls from the air,  
Queens have died young and fair,  
Dust hath dimmed Helen's eyes."

All that the lines say, on the surface, is truism and commonplace; they seem to say it baldly. But everyone feels that this show of shallow clearness is illusive, and that, beyond the more obvious and literal meaning of the words, they have a virtue or energy capable of raising in you certain emotions as unmistakable as elephants, though also as undefinable. I was reading "Love's Labor's Lost" some time ago, after a longish interval, and among the clever, youthful, bookish stuff that fills a great part of the play there seemed to stand out one passage, surely interpolated later by the full-grown genius of Shakespeare. I mean Armado's words about Hector:—

"The sweet war-man is dead and rotten; sweet  
chucks, beat not the bones of the buried; when he  
breathed, he was a man."

Coming in the middle of so much that obviously strove to be full of meaning, beauty, and wit, and to unpack itself explicitly and get the last ounce of its meaning out, this speech seemed to shine by contrast as a sovereign example of the art that can charge with an infinite evocative value phrases which in their most obvious interpretation are almost drivellingly platitudinous.

I am uneasily aware that just here we are walking close to one of the thorniest of critical thickets. The whole prickly question of symbolism, with its malign power of setting critics by the ears, and poets, too, is very near. But we need not, for the present purpose, raise the question whether this special quality of poetry, this keeping open of its communications with the subconscious part of our mental life, is mainly a Celtic contribution to literature or is a survival from the primeval poetry and legend of many races. Nor the question whether, in this effort at fuller self-expression and at communion with reality, the imagination is trying to get past the malignity and obstructiveness of a delusive world of sense and of intellect—a hostile host of "things" and of reasoned thoughts—or whether things and thoughts are themselves portions of Reality, and not even the blackest sheep among her flocks. For our immediate concern is only with the simpler issue between the traditional pregnancy of all great art—you find it even in the rather hard, dry poetry of Pope and in the most prosaic paintings of the great Dutchmen—and a kind of writing in which, almost as a matter of principle, nothing is left unsaid and no more is meant than meets the ear. You read it through, trying in charity to believe that surely the writer must have got hold of something more than he directly says; you hope he may be like the Sphinx, who used often to seem to be asking her clients an easy one when she really gave them something much tougher to tackle. But no, the pellucid rubbish has no camouflaged fullness of meaning; it is all like hard, false, literal painting on tin; the trees have no dryads about them, and the Sphinx is just a foolish old lady without any secret to keep or to tell.

Now that this protest is just at an end I begin to feel, as one often does at such moments, that I have left out most of the subject. Among the things on which there has been no time to touch is the whole question of the difference between the expression of obscurity and obscurity of expression. Of course, it is one of the most elementary faults in writing or speaking to express relatively simple things with a relatively high degree of indistinctness. It is half the work of education to cure us of this malady in its grosser forms. You find it in schoolboys' essays, where it comes of helplessness, and in the work of some minor poets who want to be crepuscular and to bring on Celtic or other twilights, but do not know how. It is for criticism to distinguish this obscurity of the confused or astigmatic mind, or of

affectation, or of a small or ill-used vocabulary, from that different element of enigma which may remain when the greatest powers of expression have been most strenuously used. Perhaps one might say, very roughly, that it is the difference between a muddled statement of something already known, and an indication—necessarily indeterminate and ambiguous—of some unexplored possibility of further knowledge. We have all found, from the current reports of the physical discoveries attributed to Einstein, how far from clear the most skilful statement of an unfamiliar scientific fact may be. One might illustrate the difference between indulgence in excess of clearness, and a proper renunciation of extreme clearness, in imaginative literature, by comparing the bad popular statements of the new discovery, in which it is made quite intelligible by being roughly and falsely summarized, with the more faithful statements of it, which are difficult because they really try to reflect a difficult matter.

Another point, and a very tough one, which I have left out, is that of the difficulty of teaching the proper limits of clearness. In all ordinary work-a-day uses of the spoken or written word we suffer so much more from want of clearness than from excess of it, that it might seem like reversing the engines of education to warn a boy or girl that one may be too clear. It might be foolish to do so in the earlier stages of education. Anyhow, it is not done; and now that we have had nearly fifty years of popular half-education, we naturally have an enormous number of people whose education has not reached the point at which any critical attitude towards this virtue of clearness is practicable or, perhaps, safe. Hence a strong economic pressure, which cannot be ignored, upon popular writers in the direction of extreme clearness or at least the appearance of it. A common result is a kind of writing rather like a watch with a highly luminous face, but with no hands. Or, to use a different illustration, it is like a tree with no roots, nothing more about it than what first meets the eye, whereas the best of imaginative writing has its leaves in the light and its roots in the darkness, and does not deny its own nature nor the continuity of the known with the unknown.

C. E. MONTAGUE.

## Reviews.

### THE APOLOGY OF THOMAS HARDY.

Late Lyrics and Earlier, with many other Verses. By THOMAS HARDY. (Macmillan. 7s. 6d.)

If it is permissible for a great writer, reviewing his life's work, to address himself to his generation in the explanatory, and even to some degree in the admonitory, vein, Thomas Hardy, of all contemporaries, holds the best title to that privilege. Since Shakespeare, no man has earned a better right to say: "Here is a picture of England, the country of my birth. Here are the people from whom she sprang, and by whom she grows; lost in her cities, or transplanted beyond the seas, they are still England." It is the special glory of this crowned work of eighty years of living that it cannot merely be described as portraiture, like Trollope's sketches of clerical life, or even as the noblest kind of traveller's tale, as is "Pickwick," but that beyond all it is an offering to England of the poetic genius of her race. If Hardy's novels and poems be a rendering of the most familiar things in the English landscape, of church and ale-house, of the handicraft of ditcher, and thatcher, and sexton, still more profoundly do they appear as its soul's mirror. Extend the long line from Hamlet to Jude, and where else shall it be stayed at such twin points of splendor? Think of "As You Like It," as a drama of English woodland, and see if your fancy will anywhere rest on the long journey to our times with greater content than on the sunlit scene of "Under the Greenwood Tree."

And now fancy's child soliloquizes. It is probable, nay clear, that Mr. Hardy views with discontent one aspect of

the national regard for his service, and accuses it of undeserved censure. He dislikes the title of pessimist; and, thinking with justice that a criticism which "hearkens for the key-creaks" and is "deaf to the diapason" misreads his music of humanity, pleads for a longer look at its architectural quality, and a broader conception of its purpose. "I have shown you," he says, "something moving, becoming, the rational poetry of life; you fix me to a sign-post at a dark crossing of the road. That was not my meaning. As life ever was, so it will be; passion and failure encompass it, and the incomplete rationality of man bears a terrible Nemesis. But if advance be in a looped orbit, and not in a straight line, advance there is, and in the old dream of alliance between science and religion lies the key of the house. With that mortar, I, Thomas Hardy, the architect, built my drama of the Ironies and the Pities, and threw it on the screen of your English imagination."

We have freely paraphrased Mr. Hardy's "Apology"; and shall make one comment on it, which, indeed, this volume of brief poems, ballads, and minor song-music sufficiently illustrates. There was, and is, a certain ghostliness in the music of Hardy. It would be impossible, we suppose, to gather from his works a single note of pure other-worldliness. The grave, he seems to say, ends all—save the unconquerable spirituality of man. Never does the past really die. Never does a human voice sink but to utter some call of the dead Orpheus to the living soul. It is this survival-quality which so impresses itself on Hardy's imagination that a great number of these later and earlier lyrics concern themselves either with the ghost-utterances of the departed or with the spirit-voices of the imagined or the desired. He makes one of his characters live a life of expectancy of an unseen visitor:—

"She was looking for a form,  
She was listening for a tread,  
She could feel a waft of charm  
When a certain word was said."

Nature's communications to man bear the same whispered suggestion:—

"The hills in samewise to me  
Spoke as they grayly gazed."

Even the musical instruments in the museum talk of their old players' dead fingers, "stroked thinner and more thin." Ghostly is the lover who draws near to the waiting woman, and the sights and sounds of the night prepare his coming with the "watchful intentness" of Egdon Heath. Thus it is the mysterious "aura" of these poems which yield them their rarely failing, at times their profound, impressiveness. Difficult, even tortured, as is their form, it is nevertheless true that only one or two poets, notably Poe, excel Hardy (in this, the second string to his bow) for the power to render the "heavily haunted harmony" of man's remembrance, the visible-invisible converse of souls. Doubtless Hardy's intense awareness of the past furnished growth and nurture for his faculty of spiritual invocation. The village is, after all, a better mirror of human life than the town; at all events, we see clearer by it and much farther into the bygone time. And to deny the true quality of poetry to such work is not only to exclude acknowledged seers like Blake, Coleridge, and Browning from the poetic field, but to break a link fast forming between the brooding intuitiveness of the spiritual thinker and the later affirmations of science.

The poems have a second quality—their gift of narrative. Hardy, like Tchekov, is a Pasha of a thousand tales; and this volume of 280 pages and over 150 pieces might well serve for a garden-nursery of a second library of Hardy novels, while at least a score throw faintly back to some old masterpiece. That the tale is of Frustration, of the drama of the wrong man with the wrong woman, can be said of them with, maybe, a little more truth than it can be said of Shakespeare. Nevertheless there are few or none to whom life brings no experience of this criss-crossness; all that can be said of Hardy is that the loss of partners in the dance happens to touch his sensibility as an artist a little more acutely or more ironically than it does some of his fellows. Certainly it is his chief

title of endearment. These *revenants* of his are touches of Everyman; the spiritual link between Youth and Age, out of which the character of both is as inevitably forged and finished as are the limbs and sinews of their common tenement. In this respect Hardy's human comedy is an appeal to one of the most wistful and enduring of all human sentiments; and if it be said that he has made an over-brooding study of his theme, he may reply, as he replies in his "Apology," that his critics "scrutinize the tool-marks" and have no eye to the building. That he wrote it with an ungenial, or even an uncheerful, mind, is as untrue a characterization of him as it is a true one of Swift. For Hardy, first and last, is the great Countryman, and first and last this is the Countryman's song:—

## I.

"This is the weather the cuckoo likes,  
And so do I;  
When showery betumblers the chestnut spikes,  
And nestlings fly:  
And the little brown nightingale bills his best,  
And they sit outside at 'The Travellers' Rest,'  
And maids come forth sprig-muslin drest,  
And citizens dream of the south and west,  
And so do I."

## II.

"This is the weather the shepherd shuns,  
And so do I;  
When beeches drip in browns and duns,  
And thresh, and ply;  
And hill-hid tides throb, throe on throe,  
And meadow rivulets overflow,  
And drops on gate-bars hang in a row,  
And rooks in families homeward go,  
And so do I."

H. W. M.

## MR. STRACHEY'S CRITICISM.

*Books and Characters, French and English.* By LYTTON STRACHEY. (Chatto & Windus. 12s. 6d.)

POSSIBLY many of Mr. Lytton Strachey's admirers, who are legion, will be slightly disappointed by this book. They have no right to be. But if they relish him only as a biographical iconoclast they will scarcely take to him as the literary hero-worshipper he will now appear to them. If, on the other hand, they admire the real Mr. Strachey, they will find him in "Books and Characters" no less than in "Eminent Victorians," for the real Mr. Strachey is neither iconoclast nor hero-worshipper. He is a man with a critical intelligence of the first order, whose delicate insight is tempered and subtilized by a catholic sympathy. Esteeming individuality of mind or temperament above all else, he goes about redressing the injustices of time. He removes the dust of neglect from forgotten faces; he stretches out a kindly hand to the creatures of oblivion. None knows so well as he that there is an oblivion of memory as well as of forgetfulness. Men and books (those faithful mirrors of men) are as often buried beneath reputation as contempt. Mr. Strachey would like to save them from both calamities.

But the majority of men would rather watch reputations being destroyed than recreated. I suspect that many have enjoyed Mr. Strachey's labors of recreation hitherto because they looked like destruction, and that they will feel they have been cheated when they read a book in which the effort of restoration is more perceptible. Many more people have a conception of Queen Victoria and General Gordon than of Racine or Voltaire. When Mr. Strachey presents them with a real image of the English notables, they feel he is being audacious and revolutionary. When he sets the real Racine and the real Voltaire before them, there is no such shock of surprise. There are no expectations to be frustrated, no ideas to be readjusted. It is much more exciting to watch the Duke of Wellington being reduced to the proportions of Mr. Creevey, than to see Mr. Creevey given back his own grotesque individuality. Justice, the finest of all virtues, is the least popular. Mr. Strachey has more of it than any other critic writing to-day.

Perhaps justice has triumphed over expediency in persuading him to place his essay on Racine at the beginning



of his book. It is the finest essay in a book full of fine essays; but it is the one for which most of his readers will be the least prepared. The essay itself is a masterpiece of justice also. Mr. Strachey is just to Racine, towards whom so many educated Englishmen find it impossible to be just. This alone is a great, perhaps an unprecedented, achievement for an English critic. But it is more remarkable still that a critic who is able to appreciate the most secret qualities of Racine should be able, as Mr. Strachey is, to be just to those many Englishmen who are unjust to them. He does not bewail their ignorance, or denounce their stupidity; he reckons with the fact that there are profound temperamental antipathies in the way, and he brings the whole resources of his insight and his power of expression to bear upon the task of removing them. He whispers to the reluctant Englishman that there is something to be seen, if only he will choose the right point of view. There is a place from which the scaffolding is hidden and only the delicate statue appears. Forget Shakespeare; think of the modern drama. "The method of 'Macbeth' has been, as it were, absorbed by that of the modern novel; the method of 'Britannicus' still rules the stage." And so Mr. Strachey leads him on, step by step, till he can see even the positive part played in the creation of Racine's atmosphere by that suppression and pompous generalization of detail which is so disconcerting to the English reader, till he can respond to the magical beauty of Phèdre's lines:—

"Ils suivaient sans remords leur penchant amoureux;  
Tous les jours se levaient clairs et sereins pour eux."

And throughout the length of this fascinating journey, which Mr. Strachey's cunning makes so simple, his wit, his deftness of touch, never fail him. Here is an enchanting glimpse of "le bout de l'oreille qui perce":—

"Mr. Bailey tells us that the couplet is only fit for satire. Has he forgotten 'Lamia'? And he asks, 'How is it that we read Pope's "Satires," and Dryden's, and Johnson's with enthusiasm still, while we never touch "Irene," and rarely the "Conquest of Granada"?' Perhaps the answer is that if we cannot get rid of our *a priori* theories, even the fiery art of Dryden's drama may remain dead to us, and that if we touched 'Irene' even once, we should find it was in blank verse."

The virtues of this essay are, indeed, inexhaustible. It is certainly one of the finest pieces of pure literary criticism ever written in English. For beautiful movement and clear profundity—that last, most perfect, and most unattainable of critical excellences—I know of nothing to compare with it. As one who humbly practises the art in the firm conviction that it is an art, I can only say: this essay satisfies my ideal of criticism. It is perfect.

I can, indeed, scarcely drag myself away from it. I want to analyze it, to dilate upon it, to pick out for the general admiration that perfect simile of the portrait with which Mr. Strachey clinches his argument. But in doing so I should be indulging the private enthusiasm of the specialist. If I have conveyed the admiration of the journeyman for the artist, of a man who knows the difficulties for the man who has overcome them, I am content, and I pause only to gather from it one of the admirably lucid sentences which give to the texture of Mr. Strachey's work its ordered richness: "All the masterpieces in the world cannot make a precedent." Nothing could be more truly, no true thing could be more excellently, said. That is the secret of the real critical attitude; and it is Mr. Strachey's secret. First appreciate the book or the character in and for itself. Judgment, if judgment comes, comes afterwards. It sounds so easy, and it is so hard, not to come to a man or a century demanding qualities it may not possess, and with the sensibility hardened against the qualities it has.

Not that Mr. Strachey himself never offends against his own standards. In his essay upon "Shakespeare's Final Period" his dislike of the rose-colored complacency with which *bien pensant* critics have tinged it, in order that Shakespeare may make a finer end than any "christom child," has led him to ignore the whole effect of "The Tempest," and to concentrate upon its parts. The counsel is, indeed, even for Mr. Strachey, a counsel of perfection. But he follows it more often and more consistently than any other contemporary critic. In no other of these essays is there a trace

of *a priori* bias. The essay on Stendhal is almost slight, but at the level to which Mr. Strachey was prepared to descend in penetrating that intriguing personality it is comprehensive and just. We only feel that on this occasion he lacked the special inducement of a rescue from oblivion. Stendhal is neither forgotten nor *rangé*; there is, as yet, no room for the work of readjustment Mr. Strachey loves. Yet we cannot help regretting that for this one occasion he did not perform the primary operation on Henri Beyle, and adjust once for all a figure who seems so oddly suited to his genius.

It is probably this impulse for adjustment which directs Mr. Strachey to the eighteenth century. There is, of course, a certain anti-romantic tendency in him which is peculiarly satisfied by the century of intelligence and order and prose. But his anti-romanticism is never extravagant, like that of so many reactionary classicists to-day. One cannot conceive him proclaiming the judgment with which M. Léon Daudet has lately fluttered the dovescotes of Paris: "Le dix-neuvième siècle est stupide." With Mr. Strachey it is hardly more than a nuance of inclination, and the motive for it is evident at the end of his essay on "The Poetry of Blake," where, after quoting—

"In Aged Ignorance profound,  
Holy and cold, I clipped the Wings  
Of all Sublunary Things . . ."

he writes: "Such music is not to be lightly mouthed by mortals: for us in our weakness a few strains of it, now and then, amid the murmur of ordinary converse, are enough." In other words, the ecstasies of Romanticism are too sublime, too intoxicating, to be fitted to the life of every day. But if this preference for a literature which is terrene and companionable counts for something in his attitude, the enticements of a work of rescue count for more. The eighteenth century is neglected; he sets himself to make it actual once more.

Madame du Deffand, Voltaire, the eccentric grand lady Hester Stanhope, gesticulating Mr. Creevey, live again. To some extent Mr. Strachey is doing the work of Sainte-Beuve once more for us, but to Voltaire, as a man, he does more justice than the great French critic did. We are never allowed to forget the presence, even in his outbursts of petulance and pettiness, of Voltaire's great spirit that "o'er-informed its tenement of clay." And if Mr. Strachey finds the work of depicting Voltaire in his habit as he lived peculiarly sympathetic, his admiration for the central genius of the eighteenth century does not prevent him from feeling the unique individuality of Rousseau. He has a paragraph at the end of his essay on "The Rousseau Affair" which puts the gist of the matter exquisitely:—

"Most readers at the present day, now that the whole noisy controversy has long taken its quiet place in the perspective of Time, would, I think, agree that Diderot and the rest of the Encyclopædists were mistaken. As we see him now in that long vista, Rousseau was not a wicked man; he was an unfortunate, a distracted, a deeply sensitive, a strangely complex, creature; and, above all else, he possessed one quality which cut him off from his contemporaries, which set an immense gulf betwixt him and them: he was modern. Among these quick, strong, fiery people of the eighteenth century he belonged to another world—to the new world of self-consciousness, and doubt, and hesitation, of mysterious melancholy and quiet, intimate delights, of long reflections amid the solitudes of Nature, of infinite introspections amid the solitudes of the heart. Who can wonder that he was misunderstood and buffeted and driven mad?"

Here, as ever, a misunderstanding is the keenest spur to Mr. Strachey's sympathies. No nuance of inclination can stand against his desire to right an injustice. So the neglect of Beddoes urges him to an admirable appreciation of that strange man's poetry.

Mr. Strachey's justice is not quixotic or sentimental. Being justice, indeed, it cannot be. But justice is a rare virtue, and its place is often supplied by sentimentalism. Mr. Strachey is always sympathetic, never sentimental. He is the suave but unyielding opponent of the method which exalts or rejects a man by standards to which he is not amenable. "All the masterpieces in the world cannot make a precedent." We have only to add "and all the personalities," and his attitude is given completely. No attitude could be more humane.

J. MIDDLETON MURRY.

## A NOVEL WITH A PURPOSE.

**The Secret Places of the Heart.** By H. G. WELLS. (Cassell. 7s. 6d.)

THE title of Mr. Wells's new novel suggests a psychological study; we imagine that we are to be given a rather intimate portrait of Sir Richmond Hardy of the Fuel Commission, but that is not really Mr. Wells's primary intention. Sir Richmond has been chosen because of his opinions and experience, because he can say appropriately certain of the things Mr. Wells wants to say to us; and other things Mr. Wells wants to say to us are said by Dr. Martineau; and others again by Miss Grammont, the American girl. Therefore, with these three people talking nearly all the time, we have Mr. Wells once more as the philosopher and economist rather than the imaginative artist. Of course, other elements are thrown in—little fragments of story most cunningly placed, a minor character or two, changes of scene, one or two love passages—to beguile the reader into the belief that he is reading a novel and not a philosophic dialogue; but the fact remains that it is what his three chief persons have to say, and not their story, that is particularly important to Mr. Wells.

Most of Sir Richmond's story is over before the book begins, and comes to us in retrospective anecdote. The novel commences when, after a nervous breakdown, he consults Dr. Martineau, a distinguished Harley Street physician, and arranges to go on a holiday tour with him. This tour is the treatment prescribed by the doctor; it may or may not prove successful, but at least it will give Sir Richmond a chance. They are to talk, to talk freely, intimately; Dr. Martineau is to act as a kind of confessor, to whom Sir Richmond will lay bare the secret places of his heart. The plan is carried out. The two men at first get on admirably together; nevertheless Sir Richmond's confessions are slightly disappointing. They do not, somehow, bring him much nearer to us, or make him much dearer. To his work we give our respect, to many of his ideas; but his secrets, largely, and perhaps inevitably, bound up with his sexual life, are just a trifle commonplace. Sir Richmond's private life would have been more interesting, we feel, and more inspiring had it not followed so frequently the line of least resistance. He is over-sexed (horrible term, but his own), and there is nothing particularly illuminating in his various amorous experiments, in his marriage, his "temporary honeymoons," his intrigue with the young artist, Martin Leeds, who is the mother of his child; even in his last love affair (the only one presented to us directly and dramatically) with Miss Grammont.

Dr. Martineau finds the recital of this sentimental vagabondage suggestive; but Dr. Martineau is writing a "Psychology of a New Age," and Sir Richmond's sexual experiences furnish him with a "most interesting and encouraging confirmation of the fundamental idea" of that work, "the immediate need of new criteria of conduct altogether." They raise a number of questions in his mind: "Was it really true that the companionship of women was necessary to these energetic, creative types? Was it the fact that the drive of life towards action, as distinguished from contemplation, arose out of sex and needed to be refreshed by the reiteration of that motive?" Well, Sir Richmond has already talked to him of "temporary honeymoons," of Lady Hardy, of Martin Leeds, and they have not been many days upon their curious pilgrimage before Martineau perceives that the chance encounter at Stonehenge with Miss Grammont is to supply yet a further "reiteration" of the sex motive. This, to the good doctor, appears a little more than he can stomach. So the travelling companions separate, and Sir Richmond and Miss Grammont are left to play whatever comedy, or tragedy, of love seems good to them. Their friendship, though passionate, remains on a platonic basis. There is a mutual confession, a parting; then Sir Richmond seeks Martin Leeds in her cottage in Cornwall, before returning to Lady Hardy and his work on the Fuel Commission. In the final chapter, presenting the best, the most human scene in the book, he dies of pneumonia.

There is no need to expound the social and economic ideas developed in the novel, because Mr. Wells has expressed these elsewhere. Now and then he forgets about them, and

at such moments the story rises at once to the higher plane of his imaginative work; and for these moments we are grateful. The whole book, however, is written with restraint, and contains a great deal that is wise and admirable.

FORREST REID.

## Books in Brief.

**In a Russian Village.** By CHARLES RODEN BUXTON. (Labor Publishing Co. Cloth, 3s. 6d.; paper, 2s. 6d.)

IN the end it is the village which will have the last word on the Russian Revolution. Under the conscious, theoretical Socialist revolution, which talked dictatorship and played for a world upheaval, a much deeper movement was taking place, the primitive peasant upheaval, which was inspired only by land hunger and aimed only at destroying the landed class. It had its way, and it has steadily driven the high-brow Marxist revolution to conform to its own conception of a desirable society. In the long run one is not sure that the Russian will do more than repeat the central achievement of the French Revolution—the creation of a people of peasant owners.

The reader who has grasped this aspect of the Russian upheaval will turn with peculiar interest to Mr. Charles Roden Buxton's little book. "In a Russian Village" is unique among the many books on the Revolution. It is a simple, direct narrative of a short stay, in the June before the famine, in a Volga village. Mr. Buxton speaks Russian, and he lived familiarly in the houses of the peasants. The sketch of their lives is sincere and truthful—so direct that one feels sure that every conversation has been accurately recorded. The sketch of a fanatical, yet capable priest is peculiarly interesting, and so are the details of the incredibly primitive agriculture. There is no political disquisition in the book, but it is, none the less, of the highest value as direct evidence on debated points. It describes the dearth of goods which resulted mainly from the civil war and partly from the blockade. In view of much that has been written about the causes of the famine, it is important to note the statement of the peasants themselves that they did not voluntarily restrict their sowing. The cause of the decline in the area tilled was mainly the decrease in the horse population which followed the war and the civil war. The politics of the peasants may be summed up in the phrase that they were for the Revolution, but against Communism. In plain words, they welcomed the Revolution because it gave them land, and supported the Bolsheviks against the Whites because they meant to keep the land. But a bald summary does injustice to this picturesque and very human book, which renders an experience that no other traveller in Russia has enjoyed.

**The Origin of Tyranny.** By P. N. URE. (Cambridge University Press. 35s.)

THE economic interpretation of history is rapidly being applied to Græco-Roman times; and if the results are as yet at no point final, they are full of suggestiveness. This able book is an attempt to prove that the tyrannies of ancient Greece were based upon the discovery of metal coinage, and that the tyrants were men who based their political power upon some special economic opportunity. Thus Peisistratus, Professor Ure urges, became tyrant because his possession of the Thracian silver mines gave him a means of building up a strength which proved irresistible; Croesus fought his way to the throne through struggles largely financial in nature; Polycrates used his control of Samian commerce to hew his way to a tyranny. The difficulties in the way of this view are very great. It is in direct contradiction to the contemporary explanations of the system, especially the famous account in the "Politics" of Aristotle. The evidence in its support is often of doubtful value, and usually indirect; its importance derives rather from its mass than from the quality of the mass. It is, moreover, in danger of mistaking association for causation. The age of the tyrants, especially in Athens, is an age of varied talents, and while riches may have helped the tyrant to power, other qualities may have



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## FASHION.

By H. DENNIS BRADLEY.

IN fashion the modern man is conservative by necessity, whilst the modern woman is revolutionary by instinct. Financially, man may be likened to the hungry leopard unable to afford a change of spots, and woman may be compared with the fabled chameleon—apparently living on air, but magically contriving perpetual change.

Man's burden is slightly lightened by the boon of being able to appear in society in last year's clothes without being ostracized. It would be tragic if one season his trousers were cut short to the knee, whilst the next they trailed on the parquet floor.

Women are more inconstant than men both in fashion and emotional fancy. They are clay in the hands of the designer. They will cheerfully discard a graceful style and even welcome an ugly one, so long as they can be persuaded it is new. They will accept any abortion if it is labelled a creation.

The new flowing gowns will cover a multitude of feet and enrich the coffers of the costumères. They will also bring great joy to the hearts of the fair ones with thick ankles.

The design and cut of men's clothes do certainly alter in the finer points from season to season, but not to the extent that the old suit is unwearable. An illustration of this occurred at one of the most fashionable hotels on the Riviera in 1922. At luncheon a man was remarked upon by several as the best dressed man in the room. It was subsequently discovered that he was wearing a suit made by Pope and Bradley in 1913. It was therefore nine years old.

This is a true and significant story. If a suit is really well cut it has the indelible stamp of style, if it is really well tailored it always retains its shape, and if it is made of the very best cloth it never wears out. As a matter of fact, Pope and Bradley's clothes last too long. But for this fact the proprietor would be a millionaire—with an impaired digestion and a jaundiced outlook. Lounge Suits from £9 9s. Dinner Suits from £14 14s. Dress Suits from £16 16s. Overcoats from £7 7s.

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been not less important. Yet Professor Ure has at least opened up a fascinating branch of inquiry, and he has done it in a scholarly and arresting manner. A word of praise should be added for the beautiful illustrations which add greatly to the attractiveness of the book.

\* \* \*

**The Uncollected Prose and Poetry of Walt Whitman.** Collected and Edited by EMORY HOLLOWAY. 2 vols. (Heinemann. 30s.)

THESE volumes are a work of that piety to which, it seems, the memory of every great man must submit. They contain all that has been recoverable of Whitman's journalistic work. We cannot say it is even interesting, except as showing how bad, how careless, how irresponsible a journalist he was. He waved the star-spangled banner with the violence that provoked "Martin Chuzzlewit." "We forget" (he wrote) "that God has given to the American mind powers of analysis and exactness superior to those possessed by any other nation upon the earth." Still, he defended Dickens against the stupid attacks of the New York Press. Some of his pictures, generalized and shadowy though they are, of Brooklyn life, and of the manners on board a river steamer, oddly corroborate Dickens's contemptuous picture. The true Whitman only makes his appearance for a few pages in the middle of the second volume, which contains the famous letter from Washington on his hospital experiences, and the fragmentary Notebooks. "No two" (he wrote in these) "have exactly the same language, and the great translator and joiner of the whole is the poet." It is a noble conception, and as profound as it is noble.

\* \* \*

**Ancient Tales from Many Lands.** By R. M. FLEMING. With an Introduction by H. J. FLEURE, D.Sc. (Benn Bros. 10s. 6d.)

IN a preface that fills in the gaps of Miss Fleming's modest foreword, Dr. Fleure defines the object of this industrious anthologist of folk-lore as the promotion among all races of "mutual understanding and appreciation, based upon a rich foundation of knowledge." Miss Fleming's theory of the right use of folk-tales in children's education seems to be that social geography and social history may be drawn nearer together by teaching them, so to speak, as one subject, and looking at them internationally rather than nationally. It is apparent that very considerable pains have been taken in the assembling of Miss Fleming's examples, their range being literally world-wide. Translations by English-speaking natives rather than native-speaking Englishmen have been used whenever possible, which seems a good notion; another being to eschew conventional illustrations in favor of a series of reproductions of native art stamped with the spirit of tradition, of which the plates supply many admirable examples. The book calls for criticism only in non-essentials. Strictly speaking, the story of Rama and Sita is an Indian rather than a Sinhalese folk-tale, of which Miss Fleming will find plenty of less-hackneyed specimens to suit her purposes if she cares to explore the Mahavansa Chronicle.

\* \* \*

**A Short History of the International Language Movement.** By ALBERT LÉON GUÉRARD. (Fisher Unwin. 21s.)

WITH the development of science the interdependence of nations has become a fact, but the peoples have never been separated by wider or more perilous chasms. Professor Guérard sees the dangers as linguistic more than national or racial, and interprets even the causes of the great war in the same way. But as scientific achievements have created a universal consciousness, he reads in this the hope of a universal conscience. A common language is essential in the progress to a true civilization. "In spite of notable exceptions, language is everywhere taken as the surest sign of a common culture. Whatever your race or nationality may be, if you speak the same language you have a bond of union, a means of approach. To speak different languages is the one impassable frontier." Professor Guérard does not mean that a common language should supersede the existing tongues, any more than the League of Nations will absorb the existing national States. It will be an auxiliary, not to suppress diversity, but to promote co-operation. The author, who gives a complete and fas-

cinating account of the international language movement, examines the claims of French, English, an Anglo-French combination, and Latin as common tongues. His conclusion are negative, for, while the adoption of a "natural" language would appear to be an easy solution, its association with a definite tradition would lead to national jealousies. As to Latin, it enjoys, as the Professor puts it, "the neutrality of death." He next examines the history and possibilities of the artificial languages, and is rather scathing in his treatment of the sentimentalists and the pseudo-scientists who reject them. He denies that there is anything unscientific in the notion of an artificial language. He discusses the merits of, and objections to, Volapuk, Esperanto, and rival systems, and decides that "the final solution seems to lie between the dialect of Zamenhof, too hybrid and arbitrary, and that of Peano, too irregular in its 'naturalness'; more precisely between Ido and Romanal. But the exact terms of the ultimate compromise it would be venturesome to forecast. The problem . . . is a social as well as a philological one, in which there enter many incalculable elements." He poses the problem of the introduction of the international language as one for the decision of the League of Nations. Professor Guérard writes with persuasive eloquence and wit.

## From the Publishers' Table.

A POEM by Mr. Hardy adds the cornerstone to "The Dorset Year-Book" for 1922. The volume altogether is a capital expression of a kindly and sensible local patriotism. Of its literary qualities any county might be proud; and the old-style ease with which it passes from grave to gay and intersperses little paragraphs among more solid reading is admirable. The secretary of the Society of Dorset Men in London, at 91-93, Bishopsgate, can supply copies by post at three shillings.

\* \* \*

ANOTHER piece of local enterprise is the publication at Guildford (Messrs. Farfield) of an album of photographic views of "Charterhouse, Godalming, and District." The compilers claim that the task was a little difficult owing to an embarrassment of riches; and they were guided in their choice of scenes by the voice of local appreciation. Their photographs and brief comments will give pleasure to anyone who likes the quiet and time-honored aspect of England.

\* \* \*

THE fifth volume of the "Catalogue of Engraved British Portraits" has been lately issued by the British Museum. It registers the "Groups" preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings; and it incidentally defines a "group" as a print "in which three or more persons are represented." Such a print may be either a pictorial composition or an exhibit of separate portraits arranged on one plate.

\* \* \*

THE evidence of dates appears to prove that "groups" are not in favor with the twentieth century. Most of them have a waxwork solemnity. The endeavor to present the public with a view of perhaps fifty frozen celebrities, "dreadfully staring" under chandeliers, in one engraving, had an element of absurdity. Yet its historical value was high: and the student of less familiar people may find their likenesses preserved on the strength of an "occasion," or literary or other panorama, where he could not discover a separate portrait. In this, the index which follows the brief descriptions makes his path easy, and notes all the persons mentioned therein.

\* \* \*

THOSE who like free verse will welcome as a sign of the times an essay in a new venture, "The Eton Candle" (Eton, Spottiswoode & Ballantyne), a finely printed volume to which Etonians both present and past contribute. The editor, Mr. Brian Howard, launches the spring offensive against rhyme and metre, and English stupidity. Mr. Harold Acton writes an essay on Rimbaud, and poems that, though they scan and rhyme, are otherwise up-to-date. The Old Etonians include Mr. Shane Leslie, Mr. Clutton-Brock, Mr. Baring, Mr. Neville Lytton, Mr. Aldous Huxley, and



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other familiar names. Swinburne is there, with four slight stanzas on "Love," previously unpublished.

LAST year the history of the Cambridge University Press formed a singularly handsome volume. "The Oxford University Press, 1468-1921," follows now. It is a contest of giants. This new volume (5s. net) owes its historical details to Mr. Falconer Madan's "Brief Account of the University Press at Oxford," 1908; those details being sketched in the first chapter, the reader passes to "The Press To-day," "The Press Abroad," and a consideration of "Oxford Books."

Of this absorbing book, so modestly unfolding so great a story, illustrated with such choice and numerous printer's ornaments and devices, title-pages and photographs, perhaps it is enough to say that it realizes our expectations. Incidentally, we notice an overlooked source of income connected with the Oxford Bible: "The Oxford Press offers a guinea for the discovery of a misprint." The author adds, "But very few guineas have been earned."

## Art.

### ILLUSTRATION.

It would be interesting to know when and why the opinion first arose that illustration is prejudicial to the art of painting. Because, if you come to think of it, all the paintings of antiquity, including those of the Far East, are illustrations before they are anything else. We may not appreciate them chiefly for that reason; indeed, in many cases we cannot, because we do not know the text; but that is evidently what they were done for. So far as it is possible to judge, they had no artistic motive whatever beyond that involved in the technical enjoyment of the practical task. If the scraps of information we have about the artists are to be trusted, they were not even always "sincere" in their interpretation of the text; and, often enough, the truth about a religious masterpiece would seem to be not that it was inspired but that it was commissioned. Except in a very few cases, like that of Fra Angelico, there seems to be no relation whatever between the recorded belief of the artist and the artistic merit of his work. The more one thinks about it, the more one is driven to the conclusion that the superiority, if any, of ancient art was due mainly to two things: a definite subject and a definite purpose, both of them ulterior to what the modern artist is taught to regard as artistic motives.

These reflections have been prompted by the very remarkable collection of Indian and Persian paintings and illuminated MSS. now on view at the British Museum. The obvious thing about them is that they are all definite illustrations for a definite purpose—the decoration of a book or a wall. In very few cases is there any reason to suppose that the subject was invented by the artist. The series begins, in time, with a copy by Mukul Dey of one of the earliest of the Ajanta frescoes, representing a young Prince and attendant women, in which the striking character is liveliness of facial expression conveyed with exemplary purity and simplicity of style; continues through some early Persian and Indian illuminated MSS. to cover the development of the Mogul School from the sixteenth to the early eighteenth century, with examples of purely Hindu styles for comparison; and ends with a few works of the contemporary Calcutta School. Specimens of the art of Eastern Turkestan, Tibet, Burma, and Siam are added for reference.

To the ordinary visitor the exhibition presents itself as pages from enchanting picture-books of which, except here and there, the text is unknown. Some general impressions are the passionate color of the early Persian MSS.—"Five Poems of Nizami" (205), for example; the individuality of the Mogul portraits, and the lyrical freshness, the "innocence," of the Hindu love-scenes

and landscapes. But, even with the disability of not knowing the text, and with the fullest appreciation of technical beauty—the drawing, "synthetic" and sometimes definitely calligraphic, but always both firm and delicate, the unfailing instinct for pattern, the taste in color and skill in its disposition—one comes back again and again to the evident enjoyment by the artist of the subject-interest. In the little pen drawing (166)—which, by the way, would enlarge up to fresco scale, so perfectly is it designed—it is not only "Nala and Damayanti" that "hail the moonrise" but the artist himself; and in "Lovers letting off Fireworks over a Tank," with smiling precaution, one would say that he recorded a personal experience. The orange-clad "Girl Walking in a Starry Night," with white cranes for interested observers, goes dreaming under her veil of gold tissue, and "The Lady and the Gazelle" might be a picture from the "Arabian Nights." In one or two instances—in the two versions, Mogul and Rajput, of "Baz Bahadur and Rupmati riding by Moonlight," for example—the definiteness of the subject-interest is emphasized by the differences in the two interpretations.

This gives point to the feeling aroused by the whole collection: that definite subject-interest and definite application, so far from fettering, set free both the imagination and the technical powers of the artist. They are pivots upon which his purely æsthetic activities revolve. Take them away, and the weight of his attention is thrown elsewhere; and, like a self-conscious person in company, he makes an aim of what should be a consequence. Without any disparagement of modern painting, one cannot help feeling that, on strictly æsthetic grounds, a great deal of it suffers grievously from the rejection of these footholds of the artist. Paradoxical as it may sound, it is precisely when painting aims directly at those purely æsthetic qualities which are, so to speak, released as consequences when the attention of the artist is given to illustration and application, that it becomes, in the offensive meaning, "art with a purpose." The feeling which a simple person often has at a modern art exhibition that the artist is "getting at him" is justified. Often enough, the artist is getting at him—if only to suggest that nude women are uglier or prettier than is commonly supposed, or that apples are not so round as they might appear to the casual observer. Painting will point a moral or adorn a tale with gain rather than loss to its æsthetic qualities, but the moment it is saddled with an opinion, however lofty in the abstract, it comes to grief. "Subject-interest" can, of course, be reduced to almost nothing—the curve of a road or the gesture of a tree; but something there must be to take off the weight of self-consciousness in the artist. What it seems to mean is that painting may dispense with but cannot safely reject any of its possibilities. If it rejects Nature, it is burdened with the corpse of the materials; if it rejects subject-interest, it either begins to argue or else declines into a mere technical exercise.

As regards application, the modern artist is hardly to be blamed, since circumstances beyond his control have driven him from his foothold upon the building or the page into the precarious freedom of the easel-picture. But that, in itself, gives an increased value to subject-interest as a means of support—in both the æsthetic and the economic sense of the word; and it is a fact that the ordinary person looks for a nearer approach to illustration in the easel-picture than in the wall-painting. What caused the reaction from illustration was, no doubt, bad illustration—the interpretation of subject-interest by men with, perhaps, intellectual gifts but no real talent for painting; but conscious reaction from a defect generally leads to the same error inverted. Some excuse for modern artists can be found in the undoubted fact that to make aims of consequences is the characteristic weakness of our times. Whether in international relations, or the spiritual life of the individual, or industrial welfare, we look back at the past, and, observing certain results which we agree to call good, we aim at them directly, regardless of the conditions which produced them in the past. Thus, the methods of M. Coué might be described as a direct aim at what should be the consequence of the Lord's Prayer



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—the peace of God which passeth understanding. For philosophical discussion "goodness" and "art" may be isolated, as in laboratory experiment it may be possible to isolate elements which are known only in combination; but, in practice, the same thing happens in either case. The isolated element goes off in a sort of gas.

CHARLES MARRIOTT.

## Music.

### A HUNGARIAN BLUEBEARD.

THE Opera-House at Frankfurt is the most enterprising musical theatre in Germany. At the present moment it is known chiefly as the place where all Franz Schreker's operas receive their first performance; but Schreker is by no means the only provider of novelties for Frankfurt. As far as concerts go, Frankfurt tends to be conservative. Berlin is more up to date in the matter of non-dramatic music. In the case of operas, Berlin generally waits to see what happens at Frankfurt. This spirit of keen enterprise is due chiefly to the leadership of Dr. Ernst Lert, the Intendant, although he very modestly says that he is only continuing the tradition of Dr. Rottenberg, who has conducted operas at Frankfurt for some twenty-five years. He is ably seconded by a young Hungarian conductor, Eugen Szenkás, who has a remarkable power of making modern music clear to audiences, and to orchestral players, too, who have not had Londoners' advantages in keeping abreast of the times.

Towards the middle of May two works by Béla Bartók were staged at Frankfurt—the one-act opera, "Duke Bluebeard's Castle," and the ballet, "The Wooden Prince." Neither of them is of very recent date: "Bluebeard" belongs to 1911 and the ballet to 1915. Both of them were produced some time ago at Budapest, but the Frankfurt performance was the first to take place outside Hungary. To German audiences Bartók's music was less familiar than it is in England. The performance was decidedly good, especially in the opera. The ballet was produced in a rather old-fashioned style; it needed a more modern type of decoration and dancing. The reception was not very cordial; the audience were very much puzzled, not so much by the actual sound of the music, as by the general mental outlook expressed in both works.

Bluebeard has become a favorite figure on the operatic stage in recent years. Paris produced Dukas's "Ariane et Barbe-bleue," Berlin the "Ritter Blaubart" of E. N. von Reznicek. Reznicek's opera was a very clever piece of work, with an ingenious libretto that attempted to present the story in terms of medieval realism streaked with modern psycho-pathology. His Bluebeard exhibited a curious habit of going down to a cellar, where the heads of his murdered wives were preserved like Marie Antoinette's at Madame Tussaud's, and there working himself up into a curious ecstasy by playing the violin to them. There was an admirable scene later in which Bluebeard buries Judith, the heroine of the opera, and makes love to his deceased wife's sister during the funeral service: after the mourners have departed there appear two comic body-snatchers, one of whom hastily opens the grave and then cries out in horror that the body has no head. Bluebeard's capacity for re-marriage being apparently as infinite as Thamar's, the only way to end the opera is for his insurgent peasantry to burn his castle down.

Bartók's librettist, Béla Balász, has treated the subject without any attempt at realism. The whole work has a well-defined sense of musical form. It is easy to say that it is lyrical rather than dramatic. A reader who comes across the poem printed as a ballad would say that it was dramatic; the conventional opera-goer, understanding the word "dramatic" to imply a constant abundance of violent physical movement on the stage, may feel this opera to

be merely lyrical. Bluebeard does little beyond stand still in the middle of the stage while Judith opens the seven doors; yet he goes through a variety of emotions, and although little may happen that is visible to the eye, something does happen, and something vital, for we start with a feeling of hostility towards him, and end with a feeling of sympathy. For this Bluebeard is not the monster of nursery fairy-tale; he belongs to the tribe of Faust and Don Giovanni. His story amounts simply to this, that woman is monogamous and man polygamous. As prologue to the opera a bard comes before the curtain to tell us in a few spoken verses that what happens on the stage is what is happening in our own hearts.

The curtain rises as he speaks, and a slow unison phrase is heard from the lower strings, with a wail of wind instruments above it. The bard disappears in the darkness. Gradually we make out a semicircular court, consisting of seven arches, each with a door in it. Nearer the front a little door opens high up in the wall, and from the door Bluebeard enters, followed by Judith. He descends to the floor level; she follows, timid and hesitating. Outside it is light; the little door shuts, and the stage is almost dark again. To live with this gloomy man in his gloomy castle she has left the light and merriment of her father's house; but she refuses to regret it. She sees the doors and wishes to open them, to let in light and air. It is no use, says Bluebeard; nothing can ever bring light into this house. She insists, and he allows her to open the first three doors. The first shows a glare of red light that falls on the floor. Strange groaning sounds are heard; it is Bluebeard's torture-chamber. The red light fascinates her, and she opens the next room—an armory. The third room is a treasure-chamber; but there is blood on the gold and silver, as there was blood upon the weapons. All this wealth is hers, he says; but she becomes the more restless and impatient. "Open the fourth door!" he says to her himself. It leads to a garden. She kneels to gather flowers, and finds that the roses are watered with blood. Bluebeard will answer no questions, but hurries her on to the fifth door. The orchestra rises to a mighty fortissimo and holds on a great chord of C major, as Bluebeard proudly says to her:—

"All my dukedom lies before you,  
Far as eye can see it stretches:  
Are my lands not wide and lovely?"

She looks out of the window in dead silence; then in a low and expressionless voice, while the orchestra waits, says:—

"Wide and lovely all your lands are."

It is all hers, he says—morning and evening, sun, moon, and stars—all hers. But a cloud passes over the landscape; there is blood in its shadow. He opens his arms to her; she sits motionless. There are still two more doors. Bluebeard begs her to go no farther. It is here that the music rises to great heights of passion. One notes the dramatic value of the two names, "Judith" and "Kékszakállú" (literally, the blue-bearded one), as each addresses the other, beseeching, warning, commanding, or despairing. Judith opens the sixth door and sees a pool of water; in the orchestra there is a gentle splash of arpeggios from harp, clarinet, and flute. It is a pool of tears, and as Judith looks at it, the figure in the orchestra grows to a convulsive sobbing. "The last door I will not open," says Bluebeard softly and firmly. She falls into his arms and he kisses her; gently she begins to question him. Has he loved other women? Were they dearer and more beautiful to him than herself? "Love me, Judith; ask no questions." She breaks away suddenly:—

"Open the seventh and last door!  
I know, I know, Kékszakállú,  
What behind that door is hidden.  
Blood is on your arms and weapons,  
Blood is on your gold and jewels,  
All your flowers with blood were watered,  
On your lands blood casts a shadow.  
I know, I know, Kékszakállú,  
Who that pool with bitter tears filled."

He gives her the seventh key; she opens the door, and there come forth three women. Judith starts back; she



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### MEDICAL.

**WHERE NATURE CURES AND SCIENCE AIDS.** HEREFORD NATURE CURE HYDRO, Uplands, Aylstone Hill, Hereford.

### LIFE IN A POLISH DUG-OUT.

- ❖ Thousands of Polish peasants who had found asylum in Russia, have now returned to devastated homes, without food, clothing, seed, cattle, or agricultural implements.
- ❖ "Baronowicze will stand out before me as long as life lasts as the most awful concrete example of the lingering horrors of war...."
- ❖ I am told that in half the cases they find their homes destroyed, and nothing is left to do but burrow into the earth for protection.....
- ❖ I saw children 14 years of age, with the minds of 7, who had never been to school."

J. H. MASON KNOX, Jr., Field Medical Advisor, A.R.C.

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had expected to find their bloodstained corpses. But they are living—tall, stately, crowned and dressed in queenly robes—they live in Bluebeard's memory. He falls on his knees and adores them. Judith is humbled; she knows that she cannot be compared with them. One by one they go back in silence; then Bluebeard takes a crown and jewels from the treasure-chamber and lays them on Judith's head and shoulders. She shall be the most beautiful of all. Slowly she follows the other women into the chamber of memory; the door shuts, Bluebeard is alone. The orchestra returns to the themes of the prologue, the stage darkens, and the music fades into silence as the curtain falls.

EDWARD J. DENT.

## Science.

### GEOMETRY AND OUR UNIVERSE.

At first sight it would appear that geometry requires an intuition of space. The primary terms used in geometry, "point," "line," "surface," &c., appear to have reference to our actual experience of space. They are idealized constructions, of course, but they presuppose, for their intelligibility, a world extended in space. Such is the usual, common-sense view, and it used also to be the view of mathematicians and philosophers. But it is essential, in order to understand the part played by geometry in modern science, to become acquainted with the true status of these concepts. The fact is that geometry is now known to have nothing peculiarly spatial about it. It is a body of knowledge which may receive magnificent illustration from our experience of space, but which could be developed independent of such experience. The axioms of geometry may be stated without appeal to spatial intuition, and deductions made from them in a purely logical manner without spatial intuitions being once concerned.

This important fact only came to light towards the end of the nineteenth century. The present point of view was admirably expressed by Pasch in 1882: "If geometry is to become a deductive science, its reasoning must be independent of the *signification of geometrical concepts* . . . only the *relations* imposed on these concepts by the postulates and definitions should be concerned in the deduction." Pasch himself took as his primitive concepts "point," "to be situated between two points," "plane surface," "congruence." These words and phrases are to be treated purely as symbols; no visual or other representation of these symbols is required. The particular four primitives with which Pasch started have been extensively modified by later geometers. If we start, for instance, with "points," "straight lines," "planes," we need give no meaning to these terms. We then designate certain relations by the words "situated upon," "situated between," "congruent to," "parallel to." These words are not supposed to awaken any sensible representation in our minds. Only their formal properties are investigated. If, after deducing the logical consequences of our postulates and definitions, we choose to make "point" mean what we ordinarily mean by "point," we may find that we have developed what we ordinarily mean by a Euclidean or non-Euclidean geometry. But if we made "point" mean a system of numbers we should find that we had developed a certain branch of algebra. Or we might have been talking about the properties of a mixture of gases. We should have been talking about any entities, in fact, which obeyed the same set of purely formal relations. Those properties of space which make it space to us, and not systems of linear equations or gas mixtures, are not dealt with by geometry. To develop a geometry it is not necessary to know what our fundamental entities are, nor whether there are any actual entities of which the formal relations we discuss hold good. As Bertrand Russell has put it: "Mathematics may be defined as the subject in which we never know what we are talking about, nor whether what we are saying is true."

How, then, can these abstract exercises throw any light on the real world? The answer is obvious. Any particular geometry may be applied to the real world as an *hypothesis*. We may say that there are, in fact, actual entities in the real world which are related as are the entities in some particular geometry. And to test this statement we must have recourse to experience, to experiment. Any number of geometries can be built up in the logical, formal manner we have mentioned. Geometrical axioms are free creations of the human mind. We can build up Euclid's geometry, and we can, just as legitimately, build up any number of non-Euclidean geometries. Which one we use to describe the real world is a matter of convenience. Gauss, the great German mathematician, undertook practical measurements on the earth's surface to find whether Euclidean or a non-Euclidean geometry better fitted the facts. We believe to-day that a non-Euclidean geometry, the general geometry of Riemann, best fits the facts of physics.

Some people appear to believe that, although non-Euclidean geometries are as logically valid as Euclid's, yet the geometry to be applied to the real world must necessarily be Euclidean. There is certainly no scientific reason for this belief; it is wholly based, we suspect, on the difficulty of "imagining" a non-Euclidean space. But an analogy helps us to overcome even this difficulty. Suppose we define a "straight line" so that it is: (1) necessarily finite; (2) two straight lines can enclose a space; (3) an infinite number of straight lines can pass between two points; (4) no straight line can be drawn parallel to a given straight line. If we build up a geometry on these definitions it will obviously be non-Euclidean. But two-dimensional creatures, with minds like our own, would build up just such a geometry if, instead of living on a plane, they lived on the surface of a sphere. Their "straight line," the shortest distance between two points, would be an arc of a great circle. Two such arcs, like the lines of longitude joining the north and south poles on our earth, would enclose a space. An infinite number of such arcs could pass between any two points at opposite ends of a diameter. No "straight line," *i.e.*, arc of a great circle, could be drawn parallel to another. Moreover, the "space" of these creatures would be *finite but unbounded*. They could wander all over their space for ever and ever without meeting any barrier to further movement; but the total space would be of finite extent. Einstein believes that the same holds good of our space. It is finite, but it has no boundaries. It is more difficult to picture such a space in three dimensions, but it can be done, and the possibility of such a visual representation may help many minds to overcome the difficulty of granting that the geometry best adapted to our world is a non-Euclidean geometry.

S.

## Forthcoming Meetings.

- Sat. 3. Royal Institution, 3.—"Early Keyboard Music," Lecture II., Sir Hugh Allen.
- Sun. 4. Indian Students' Union (Keppel St., W.C.1), 5.—"India, China, and Europe: a Traveller's Impressions," Miss E. E. Power.
- Tues. 6. Royal Institution, 3.—"The Foundation of the Persian Empire," Sir Percy Sykes.
- King's College, 5.30.—"Influence of Geography on the Economic Conditions of Jugo-Slavia," Lecture II., Dr. D. Subotic.
- University College, 5.30.—"Phänomenologische Methode," Lecture I., Prof. E. Husserl. (In German.)
- Wed. 7. Imperial College of Science, 5.15.—"Recent Investigations on the Substitution in the Benzene Nucleus," Dr. A. F. Holleman.
- University College, 5.30.—"Past History of Art Teaching," Lecture III., Prof. T. Borenius.
- Thurs. 8. University College, 2.—"The Greek Theatre," Lecture II., Prof. E. A. Gardner.
- Royal Institution, 3.—"Theocracy: III. The State Invisible," Dean Inge.
- Royal Institute of British Architects, 5.—"What is Architectural Design?" Mr. D. S. MacColl.

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